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A YOUNG ENGLAND NOVEL.

It is as natural in the present day to forget the *raison d'être* of the "Young England" party, as it is easy to satirize its principles and its programme. Romantic absurdity and picturesque extravagance notwithstanding, its mission becomes intelligible when examined by the light of historical facts. The writings and the speeches of the Coryphæi of "the New Generation" forty years ago were a protest against the prevailing *régime*, political and social, not without something of national significance. Young England essayed the patriotic task of interpreting the discontent of the older and the more prosaic England, and of supplementing these functions with a pseudo-philosophic statement of the cause of the evil, and the suggestion of a picturesquely impossible propaganda for its cure. The nation was thoroughly dissatisfied with the practical results that had followed Earl Grey's measure of 1832. It had been led to anticipate a social regeneration as an immediate sequel: it found as a matter of fact that things continued pretty much as they were before; that the relations of labour and capital were not ameliorated; that the condition of the people was not improved. The commercial aristocracy, whom Pitt had created for the purpose of playing off in his political system against the aristocracy of birth, had the first place in the attentions of Peel. Parliamentary power was not exercised for the good of the masses, and the masses rushed to

the conclusion that popular representation was a delusion, and the Reform Bill itself nothing better than one vast legislative sham. The reformers were told that they had tricked the constituencies; the anti-reformers were accused of acquiescing passively in the deception. "No party," said Mr. Disraeli, in his preface to "Lothair," "was national: one was exclusive and odious, and the other liberal and cosmopolitan."

The French revolution had spread throughout Europe a vague desire to reconstruct society upon the lines of an ideal perfection; and the public faith which Young England elaborated was as much a product of the inspiration of the great drama enacted in Paris, as the project of Coleridge and Southey for reorganizing humanity upon a pantisocratic basis. No one denied that the times were out of joint; but no one could see how the mummeries and morris dances, the reversion to ancient rites and forgotten customs, which were essential ingredients in the political nostrum of Young England, would suffice to put it right. Just as the resuscitation of classic names, and an affectation of a primitive simplicity of habit, were integral parts in the system of the political philosophers of the French revolution, so Young England strove to create anew the traditions and the influences of that golden age which began with feudalism, and which

vanished when Charles I. became the "holocaust of direct taxation."

At a time when the erewhile reputed leader of Young England is the Prime Minister of the British empire, it may be worth while to say something about the three politicians whose names are most prominently associated with the phrase. "Living much together," Mr. Disraeli has written of himself and his friends at this period, "without combination we acted together. Some of those who were then my companions have, like myself, since taken some part in the conduct of public affairs; two of them, and those who were not the least interested in my speculations, have departed. One was George Smythe, afterwards seventh Lord Strangford, a man of brilliant gifts, of dazzling, not definite, culture, and fascinating manners. His influence over youth was remarkable, and he could promulgate a new faith with graceful enthusiasm. Henry Hope, the eldest son of the author of 'Anastasius,' was of a different nature, but he was learned and accomplished, possessing a penetrating judgment and an inflexible will. Master of a vast fortune, his house naturally became our frequent rendezvous, and it was at Deepdene that he first urged the expediency of my treating in a literary form those views and subjects which were the matter of our frequent conversation." The outcome of this the world has before it in the history of "Coningsby," "Sybil," and "Tancred."

Mr. Disraeli was the first who attempted to give anything like political consistency to the sentimental statesmanship which was discussed in "the glades and galleries of the Deepdene." It would indeed be a mistake to look to "Coningsby" for the political philosophy of Mr. Disraeli himself. Neither that nor any of his novels contains a political system to whose principles their author is prepared uniformly to adhere. Mr. Disraeli's statesmanship has always been empirical, and is therefore without a philosophy. But it is in "Coningsby" that the chimerical aspirations of Smythe's "Historic Fancies" and "England's

Trust"—Lord John Manners's volume of poems—are first expressed in a form which is precise, and which at least pretends to be practical. A critic of the day compared the members of the select little coterie—to the infant prodigy, of whom the fond mother exclaimed, "Dear baby, it has got a little of everything!" So, he said, it is with Young England: it has got a little of history, somewhat more of metaphysics, and a small portion of unintelligible theology. It is the mission of the hero of Mr. Disraeli's best known political fiction to rally the aristocracy round the Sovereign—to establish an alliance between Crown and Chartists, peer and peasant; to restore the original constitution in Church and State; or, if that be impossible, to relieve the Church of its alliance with the State, and of the "indignity of having its bishops virtually appointed by the House of Commons, which is now a sectarian assembly." Mr. Disraeli had been four years in Parliament when Lord John Manners published his poems and his pamphlets, and seven years when George Smythe's "Historic Fancies" made their appearance. It is customary to speak of the exceptionally disadvantageous circumstances under which Mr. Disraeli commenced his political career; but Mr. Disraeli had opportunities denied to Burke, or Sheridan, or Canning. The distinction of his father, and the reputation which he had himself won as a novelist, had already combined to secure him recognition in society. At Lady Blessington's he had made the acquaintance of the most celebrated personages of the day. He was the friend of D'Orsay and of Duncombe. Introduced by Mr. Hope to Lord Granby, the present Duke of Rutland, he became a visitor at Belvoir, and gathered his initial experience of those scenes of high political life which are depicted in his novels. In joining, or rather in organizing, the Young England party, Mr. Disraeli was at once placing himself at the head of a sentiment of distrust in the Conservative policy of the time, and was secur-

ing to himself the unquestionable advantage of a great social alliance. The romance which tinged the political and religious sentiments of Lord John Manners and Mr. George Smythe, their admiration for all that was splendid in the ceremonials of feudalism, for the grandeur and the picturesqueness of English mediævalism, may also have had a congenial attraction for Mr. Disraeli, whose innate love of Oriental pageantry had been stimulated by recent experiences of travel in the land of his race. "Coningsby," which was published three years after Lord John Manners's poems, and in the same year as Mr. Smythe's "Historic Fancies," should be regarded rather as a tribute at the shrine of friendship than the exposition of political principles which it was seriously contemplated to translate into action. Mr. Disraeli did in admirable prose what Lord John Manners has done in very mediocre verse: he commemorated in a spirit of appropriate gratitude associations which had been to him of the utmost profit and importance. But the political significance of "Coningsby," as of Mr. Disraeli's other novels, is critical only, and it is a pregnant commentary on their author's consciousness of the visionary nature of Young-England's projects that in "Coningsby" and in "Sybil" the story is prudently concluded before its *dramatis personæ* have addressed themselves practically to the reforms which they have preached in periods of glowing antithesis and paragraphs of sparkling paradox.

The political union between the three chiefs of the Young England party—their followers being Mr. Hope, Lord Granby, Mr. Baillie Cochrane, Lord Ellesmere, and Mr. Monckton Milnes—was of brief duration. The same year as that which saw the publication of "Coningsby," heard the formal repudiation by George Smythe of the principles of protection; and in 1845 both Lord John Manners and George Smythe voted with Sir Robert Peel's majority and against Mr. Disraeli in the matter of the Maynooth Grant. George Smythe was always the

weakest link in a weak, because a purely sentimental, chain. The predominant idea in his mind was the necessity of maintaining an ancient territorial aristocracy. The predominant idea with Lord John Manners the necessity of maintaining, in addition to such an aristocracy, a not less aristocratic and a universally beneficent Church. The Ecclesiastical Counsellor of the coterie, to whom both Lord John Manners and Mr. Smythe dedicated various sonnets, was Frederick Faber of the Oratory, author of "The Water Lily on the Cherwell." His lordship had come to the conclusion that society might be regenerated by the instrumentality of monastic institutions and holydays, over which the Church should preside. But what Church? Not the Church of the Reformation; for that Lord John had as undisguised a detestation as for the Protestant Settlement of 1688. Not the Church of Rome either, which he admits may have deviated into extravagances, as Protestantism has undoubtedly into coarse excesses; but some Church superior to and independent of the State—such a Church system as that of our fathers, "which sanctioned and hallowed the every-day employments, the needful recreations, the birth, life, and death of the poorest and meanest artisan," and which is "holier and better and more politic than that state system of ours which places labour at the mercy of mammon, handing over with easy indifference the recreation of the people to Socialism and Chartism, and contents itself with rejecting the miserable birth, and the yet more miserable death, of the toiling being whose life it disregards." Lord John Manners's ideal Church was an institution designed to spiritualise the people in the aristocratic interest.

Just as "England's Trust" was dedicated "most affectionately and admiringly, *parvum, non parvæ pignus amicitiae*," "to the Hon. George Percy Sydney Smythe," so "Historic Fancies" is inscribed—"To Lord John Manners, M.P., whose gentle blood is only an illustration of his gentler conduct, and

whose whole life may well remind us that the only child of Philip Sydney became a Manners, because he is himself as true and blameless—the Philip Sydney of our generation.” “*Historic Fancies*” is less ecclesiastical, more purely aristocratic in its tone, if that be possible, and aims at something more in the direction of philosophic history than Lord John Manners’s volume of verse. The opening essay is a vigorous panegyric upon the aristocracy of France, whom the author describes as “the most illustrious that the world ever saw.” The spirit of the churchmanship, which was a vital article in the new Anglican Creed, soon asserts itself. The “Catholic Cavalier” is a lively lay supposed to be sung at the restoration of the second Charles:—

“A hundred years of wrong shall make our
vengeance strong,
A hundred years of outrage, and blasphemy
and broil,
Since the spirit of Unrest sent forth on
her behest
The Apostate and the Puritan to do their
work of spoil!
Since the tyrant’s wanton bride trode the
truth done in her pride,
And God for England’s sin gave power to a
lie—
And through the land the light of False-
hood burnt all bright,
As each churl thought to see the day-spring
dim on high.”

The following extract from the note which follows the poem will illustrate the identity of Mr. Smythe’s and Lord John Manners’s ecclesiastical views:—
“I have” (he writes), “in the foregoing ballad purposely made no distinction between the Churches of Rome and England, because if I had done so, I think I should have been untrue to the character and feeling of the Roman Catholics of the time. The limits which separated the Churches could not have been thought of by such men as Sir Kenelm Digby very broad, or the obstacles to union very strong.” There are several other poems in this volume, all emanating from much the same inspiration, and fashioned after the model of Macaulay and Præd. Generally, however, it may be said that the sentiment of these com-

positions is more liberal than that of the eccentric patriotism which was the ruling passion of Lord John Manners’s muse. The member for Canterbury bids his readers adieu with a really stirring song in honour of the merchants of old England:—

“The land it boasts its titled hosts—they
could not view with these,
The Merchants of Old England, the Seig-
neurs of the seas,
In the days of Great Elizabeth, when they
sought the western main,
Maugre and spite the Corsair’s might and
the menaces of Spaiæ.”

“And by the power that was her dower,
might Commerce once more be
The Helper of the Helpless, and the
Saviour of the Free;
Then glory to the Merchants who shall do
such deeds as these,
The Merchants of Old England, the Seig-
neurs of the seas.”

A more noticeable feature in the “*Historic Fancies*” is the manifest influence of *les idées Disraeliennes*. The philo-Judaism or philo-Ottomanism, which occasionally colours the writings of Mr. Smythe, extends to the work of an author of whom more is known, Mr. Monckton Milnes, the present Lord Houghton: “Thy heart has been stirred within thee at the glories of Islam. Doubt not; truth is not mine only, but multiform. And benevolence is the disciple of truth.” “The conquest of Egypt and Morocco, the invasion of Spain, the learning of Cordova, the politeness of Damascus, Charlemagne, and Haroun al Raschid, Saladin and the Crusades, Boabdil and Granada! What animated associations! What themes for luxurious or thoughtful reflection! What inevitable incitement for future history among a race almost as numerous as that of Christendom, and far more susceptible to the legends of their faith.”¹ Such passages as these illustrate the degree to which the enthusiasm of Young England was interpenetrated by the associations of old Judæa. *Inter alia* the author of “*Historic Fancies*” suggests in all earnest that it might be desirable to revive the practice of

¹ See *Historic Fancies*, p. 379.

"touching for the evil" on account of the "direct communication which it brought about between the highest and the lowest, between the king and the poor." "If," he adds, "the great only knew what stress the poor lay on the few forms which remain to join them, they would make many sacrifices for their maintenance and preservation. Dr. Johnson, a man of the people, if there ever was one, was yet prouder of having been touched by Queen Anne, when he was a child, of speaking about the great lady in black, of whom he had an indistinct recollection, than he was of all the heroism under misfortune and of all the erudition of his works."

Such were the vague aspirations which it remained for Mr. Disraeli to popularise in his novel. The task was not an easy one, but it was executed with consummate skill. Chief of the sect of Young England, as Mr. Disraeli had been unanimously nominated, he was without some of the qualifications for his new position which George Smythe and Lord John Manners each possessed. Though long since intimate with English society, he had never received the early training of an English statesman. He had neither been at a public school nor a university. "Born in a library," to use his own expression, his only knowledge of English boys and classical literature had been picked up at an "academy for young gentlemen," kept by a Nonconformist minister, Mr. Cogan, at Walthamstow. But Mr. Disraeli's genius triumphed over all these obstacles. He produced in "Coningsby" not only a graphic picture of Eton life, and a complete synoptical epitome of the opinions of Young England, political, social, religious; but, so far as its purely political and many of its descriptive passages were concerned, a telling impeachment both against the results of the Whig Reform Bill and against the principles of Modern Toryism as illustrated by Sir Robert Peel. "Coningsby" combined with the attractions of a fashionable novel the animus of a political pamphlet. It at once

served as the avatar of Neo-Anglicanism, by bringing the principal personages of the party into one focus, and took a brilliant place in the *chronique scandaleuse* of the period by its satirical portraits of some of the best known people of the time. More than this, its fruitful repertory of political aphorisms and constitutional maxims supplied Mr. Disraeli with an abundant justification for the attack which he had already commenced to make on Sir Robert Peel, and which he was shortly to renew with increased bitterness and effect.

In 1844 Mr. Disraeli was already known as a novelist of singular gifts, and he was still best known by "Vivian Grey." A "key" was published to this "book written by a boy"—as its author has since with an affectation of contempt called it—according to which the originals of the characters were as follows:—Vivian Grey, the author; Sherborne, Disraeli the elder; Marquis of Carabas, Lord Lyndhurst; Stanislaus Hoax, Theodore Hook; Duke of Juggernaut, Duke of Norfolk; Prince of Little Lilliput, Prince Leopold; Mr. Million, Mr. Coutts; Foaming Fudge, Brougham; Lord Prima Donna, Lord Wm. Lennox; Prince Xttnpqrtosklw, Prince Gortchakoff; Fitzborn, Sir Robert Peel; Charlatan Gas, Canning; Lord Past Century, Eldon; Marquis of Grandgout, Marquis of Hertford; Mrs. Felix Lorraine, Lady Caroline Lamb; Southey, Brummell, Esterhazy, and Metternich, and other celebrities, being the prototypes of the minor personages introduced into the panorama of this startling romance. It may be mentioned that another "interpretation" was current at the time the novel appeared. The ill-starred *Representative* started by Mr. John Murray (the elder) had just collapsed; its death speedily followed an article commencing "As we were seated the other night in our opera-box." It was declared that in "Vivian Grey" the ex-editor of the *Representative* had, as in a parable, depicted the fortunes of a newspaper, and that the Marquis of Carabas was none other than the enterprising publisher of Albemarle

Street himself. It was only about eight years ago that Mr. Disraeli condescended to correct the impression that he was connected with this organ, by stating that he had never written a line for it, and that he had at no period of his life acted as a journalist. This assertion, of course, settles the matter; and, so far as the editorship of the *Representative* was concerned, I believe I may state positively that it was assumed by Lockhart, the editor of the *Quarterly*. There is less dispute as to the identity of the human models who sat to Mr. Disraeli in "Coningsby." The hero, Coningsby himself, is none other than the author of the novel now before us.¹ Lord Henry Sydney is Lord John Manners; Buckhurst, Mr. Baillie Cochrane, the present member for the Isle of Wight; Lord Monmouth represents the late Marquis of Hertford; "the Duke" is his late Grace of Rutland; Lord Eskdale, Lord Lonsdale; Lucian Gay, Theodore Hook; Mr. Lyle, the amiable and excellent Lord Surrey; Mr. Rigby, John Wilson Croker; Sidonia, a sublimation, one-half Mr. Disraeli himself, and the other half Rothschild; Lucretia, Madame Zichy; the Countess Colonna, according to a letter written by Lord Palmerston in 1844 to her brother, not "Lady Strachan, though the character is evidently meant to fill her place in the family party;" Messrs. Earwig, Tadpole, and Taper, Messrs. Ross, Bonham, and Clarke. Mr. Ross, it may be said, subsequently married Lady Mary Cornwallis, was a famous whist-player, and a Parliamentary oracle in the matter of minute precedents and details of legislative etiquette. With Mr. Bonham Mr. Disraeli had, a few years before "Coningsby" appeared, had a quarrel. He accused him of high treason in the House of Commons, confusing him with his brother—a mistake which Sir Robert Peel was not slow to detect and to

visit with a rebuke that Mr. Disraeli avenged with interest. It may be conjectured that Mr. Millbank was suggested by Henry Hope, and that Mr. Ormsby and Mr. Melton were rough likenesses of Mr. Irving and Mr. Harris respectively. It is unnecessary to say anything specially of the characters in "Sybil" or "Tancred." They are much more shadowy adumbrations than those of the fiction which introduced the series, with perhaps the single exception of Mr. Vavasour in "Tancred," who is a happy sketch of Mr. Monckton Milnes. The reception accorded to "Sybil"—the unintelligible affectation, or the not less unintelligible ignorance, which induced Mr. Disraeli thus systematically to transpose the two vowels in the familiar Greek word Σίβυλλα is quite as intolerable as the affectation which leads him to write "and which" for "which"—was very different from that obtained by "Coningsby." Both novels were successful—even brilliantly successful. Neither was made the subject of the hyperbolic praise, or the not less exaggerated condemnation which had been the meed of their predecessor; and for the simple reason that neither "Tancred" nor "Sybil" had a tithe of the bitterness or the personality of "Coningsby" condensed into their pages. Mr. Colburn, it is stated, paid two thousand pounds for the copyright of that novel: a critic of the day remarked that it was worth twenty thousand, but that he himself would not have written it for sixty. The truth is, no person but Mr. Disraeli could have written it at all. There is nothing in the whole range of fiction like the concentrated venom of the sketch of Rigby, *alias* the Right Hon. John Wilson Croker, just as there is nothing in the whole history of the vituperative rhetoric of Parliament like Mr. Disraeli's consummately artistic onslaughts on Sir Robert Peel. It has been said that Wilson Croker repaid Mr. Disraeli with an article in the *Quarterly* on "Coningsby." No such article ever appeared, and it is worth notice that no mention whatever is made in that periodical of Young

¹ "Angela Pisani," a novel, by the late Hon. George Sydney Smythe, seventh Viscount Strangford. London: Richard Bentley and Sons, 1875.

England from first to last. "An Embryo M.P.," in 1845, the year after "Coningsby" appeared, attempted a sort of literary reprisal on Mr. Disraeli in "Anti-Coningsby," caricaturing its author as Ben Sidonia. The novel is deservedly forgotten, and the few moderately clever passages which it contains are some satirical criticisms on the fashionable novels of the period. The writer, being a lady, is true to the jealous traditions of her sex, and lashes Mrs. Gore with considerable severity. The second hero is Ben Sidonia's ally, Gym Customs—Lord John Manners. The novel concludes with the defeat of Ben Sidonia in England, and his flight to Syria, there to organise a Young Palestine party. The penultimate scenes are a poor attempt at fun. Ben Sidonia and Gym Customs have had a temporary triumph. There is high carnival—a parody of the Christmas rejoicings at St. Geneviève in "Coningsby"—when "the buttery hatch was open for the whole week from noon to sunset; all comers might take their fill, and each carry away as much boiled beef, white-bread, and jolly ale, as a strong man could bear in a basket with one hand. For every woman a red cloak, and a coat of broadcloth for every man." Writes the author of "Anti-Coningsby":—"Cock fights, wrestling matches, boxing, shooting at targets, hobby-horses, grinning through horse collars, were the order of the day. Bread and beef and beer were everywhere distributed (the sinking fund paid the piper); music and singing were heard at every inn. Dancing, too, there was, and no rick-burning, but plenty of fireworks." Finally comes a procession. First, "the whole operative corps, Mosaic Arabs, to a man;" then "the Marquis of Wilton, with his head to his horse's tail, devouring the puddings with the most unremitting voracity;" then "fifty thousand of the new generation, in white chokers and vests, trying to look supercilious and sarcastic at the crowd." Last of all, "Lord Gymnastic Customs, on a hobby-horse, drawn by opera dancers in short petti-

coats and high boots, balancing a cricket bat on the tip of his nose, with his hands tied behind him." This sort of thing may provoke a passing smile, but it is poor stuff, and it stands in the same relation to Thackeray's "Codlingsby" that mere buffoonery always does to genuine satire.¹

The absence of any attempt to caricature George Smythe in "Anti-Coningsby" is significant. He had already broken with the Young England clique. In October 1844, at Manchester, he expressed himself a convert to the principles of Free Trade. From the very first he had dissented from the views of Mr. Disraeli and Lord John Manners on foreign and domestic politics, alleging with perfect truth that they led logically to sheer and unmitigated absolutism. There is nothing in George Smythe's career to make us suppose that he ever occupied in the "Young England triumvirate" the position assigned to him in "Coningsby." The identity between Lord Monmouth's grandson and the member

¹ But of all the satires on Young England none can be more amusing than that which is to be found in "Coningsby" itself. "Buckhurst," remarks Mr. Melton, (Book viii. Chapter i.) "is not in that sort of way; he swears by Henry Sydney, a younger son of the duke, whom you don't know, and young Coningsby; a sort of new set, new ideas, and all that sort of thing." "A sort of animal magnetism, or unknown tongues, I take it, from your description," said his companion. "Well, I don't know what it is," said Mr. Melton, "but it has got hold of all the young fellows who have just come out. Beau is a little bit himself. I had some idea of giving my mind to it, they made such a fuss about it at Everingham, but it requires a devilish deal of history, I believe, and all that sort of thing." "Ah, that's a bore," said his companion. "It's difficult to turn to with a new thing when you are not in the habit of it. I never could manage charades." . . . "Have you heard anything about it?" continued Mr. Cassilia. "Young Coningsby brought it from abroad; didn't you say so, Jimmy?" "No, no, my dear fellow; it's not at all that sort of thing." "But they say it requires a deuced deal of history," continued Mr. Cassilia. "One must brush up one's Goldsmith. Canterton used to be the fellow for history. He was always boring one with William the Conqueror, Julius Caesar, and all that sort of thing."

for Canterbury ends with Cambridge as it began with Eton. It is impossible not to feel that into the composition of Mr. Disraeli's hero there enters an element which Mr. Disraeli never contemplated or discovered in the accredited original—that, in fact, just as Sidonia is Rothschild with the Disraeli sublimated, so Coningsby may be Smythe, but is Disraeli too. But Mr. Disraeli was not at Eton or Cambridge, as were his friends, therefore he could not avowedly place his own features in the gilded frame that he had prepared.

In her graceful memoir prefixed to "*Angela Pisani*," Lady Strangford speaks of her brother-in-law as having had genius, nor is the expression too strong. The testimony of the Rev. W. G. Cookesley, for many years a master of Eton, and now rector of Tempsford, Beds, supplies me with an interesting confirmation of Lady Strangford's statement:—

"I was not," writes Mr. Cookesley, "his tutor, but I was extremely fond of him as a boy. When he came to Eton he was in my division, *i.e.*, he was placed in that part of the school of which I was concerned in the management. After he had been under me a few days, I went to his tutor, Mr. Pickering, to learn who he was. Pickering asked me, 'Why I wished to know?' I replied, 'Because that boy is a very clever boy; I am sure he has genius about him.' Though he was, as I have said, not my pupil, yet I always kept up an intimacy with him, which, I am happy to say, survived our Eton life, and I knew him to the last. I remember that Smythe got a prize for English verse in this way. During William IV.'s reign, who always came to election speeches—as we used to call the ceremonial at the close of our summer school time—Dr. Hawtrey, the head-master, always gave a prize to the boy who wrote the best poetical address to his Majesty. In 1835 Smythe got this prize. . . . I had a great love for George Smythe; he was so genial and generous. Unhappily he

"Wore his heart upon his sleeve"

For daws to peck at."

But he was a noble bird himself."

The "poem" to which Mr. Cookesley alludes, and which he has most obligingly forwarded to me, does not rise above the ordinary merit of such compositions, but concludes with some lines which are interesting as a metrical

commentary on some of the more ambitious soliloquies in "*Coningsby*:"—

"And here, perchance, some yet may earn a name
Not all unworthy of their fathers' fame;
For in this mimic world your hearts beat high,
And feed on thoughts of bright futurity.
Oh! may not all their orisons be vain!
May joy ne'er change to woe, nor hope to pain,
May Glory's flame some Wellington inspire,
Another Gray invoke the Theban lyre;
Some Grenville wise—some Canning yet be known,
To charm the Senate and uphold the throne."

Physical reasons, if no other, must have prevented George Smythe from realising in his own person this ambitious dream. Political success and party eminence in England imply extraordinary powers of bodily endurance as well as unflagging patience and indomitable resolution. George Smythe had the intellectual aptitudes, but he was without either the moral or the physical qualifications. Some of his speeches in the House of Commons, in which he sat for eleven years as member for Canterbury, were exceedingly telling—notably those on the Maynooth Grant, and the annexation of Cracow, subjects on which he was opposed diametrically to Mr. Disraeli. But it was as a hustings orator that he was most effective, and an interesting account has been given by one who was present on the occasion of the speech which he made to his constituents at Canterbury in 1847, when he was called on to vindicate his political independence. It was said that Peel offered him the Under-Secretaryship of State in 1846, "with a view of breaking up the Young England party." But the Young England party had been broken up a long time previously. George Smythe was a convert to Peel at least as early as 1843. The words which he addressed to his constituents in 1847 contain a short summary of the history of his political opinions. On the subject of his opposition to Sir Robert Peel, he says:—

"I came in with others, full of hot thoughts and ardent speculations, and we sat by men

or sooth who are now patriots, but who then had but one rule, which adapted itself to all things, to all measures, to all debates, to all bills—the will of the sole minister. When persons were thus substituted for principles, personalities became a duty with those who wished to substitute principles for persons. 'I am no more ashamed of having been a Republican,' said Mr. Southey, 'than of having been a boy,' and I am no more ashamed of having used strong language against the minister than I am of having been young. But now that I appear before you to render an account of my parliamentary conduct, I would fain take this opportunity of making an apology to a great man—a great man who has since shown that his heart was all the while with the people. But if I now regret the strong language—now here before you—I do not regret its occasion, for it was always used in defence of English liberties."

For five years, while Peel was succumbing, or after he had succumbed, to the attacks of Mr. Disraeli, George Smythe was writing in the paper that had been bought to support the Peelite cause—the *Morning Chronicle*. How soon and how entirely Smythe succeeded in making his mark as a speaker may be inferred from the fact that in 1841—the same year as he entered Parliament—Mr. Gladstone said, in reply to the question asked him by Sir Robert Peel, what member should be chosen to second the address to the Crown: "There are two young speakers beyond all others to choose—Jem Bruce and George Smythe." Lady Strangford's estimate of his character is probably correct:—

"He was never a very ready speaker; he had to be worked up under the pressure of a high nervous excitement, which not only wore him out, but made him much less useful than he would otherwise have been. His speeches were graceful, striking, rich in imagination and glow; but he required time to elaborate them, and an effort to overcome his natural or constitutional indolence to deliver them. . . . He could not curb his erratic and restless disposition to the trammels and discipline of a party. He had none of the habits indispensable for close and solid study, just as he was too impulsive for the sober, steady, round of daily work in public life."

Peel undoubtedly made a blunder in not giving Mr. Disraeli a place in his government in 1841. He may very likely have made a mistake in passing over the claims of George Smythe. As a

statesman George Smythe can only rank among the might-have-beens; as a speaker he was successful; as a writer he was brilliant; as a journalist he gave up to the *Morning Chronicle* what Mr. Disraeli thought or professed to think—though his interest in "Coningsby" subsided considerably after the disruption of Young England on Peel and Maynooth—was meant for the House of Commons; as a prominent figure in London society George Smythe is not yet forgotten.

It was indeed in society that the gifts of art and nature alike qualified him eminently to shine—a polished address, great conversational power, and, what is more, conversational tact, that *savoir faire* which good breeding and knowledge of the world alone can give, and, to quote Lady Strangford's happy description, "a bright deferential sweetness of manner about him which conveyed at once and equally the idea of his wish to please his companions and of their power to please him." "His aptitude for satire," writes to me one who knew him intimately, "gave an exquisite flavour and piquancy to his talk"—a natural gift which, as his accomplished memorialist and editress tells us, had been too assiduously cultivated by his father, so that "at any time, when the spirit seized him, he would turn his nearest and dearest friend upon the spit of his ridicule, while yet all the time adoring that friend in his heart;"—"and it used to be said that 'Canterbury Smythe' after dinner was as the devilled biscuit or the olives to the claret. He brought out of the company all that these relishes could bring out of the wine. We all used to think," continues my correspondent, "that he mistook his *métier*, which was clearly rather diplomacy than Parliament." There can be no doubt that this remark is true. Lionel Averanche in "Angela Pisani" is probably a much more faithful portrait of George Smythe than "Coningsby" is. Like Averanche, Smythe united to his intellectual tastes and political and literary ambitions a craving after fashionable fame. Keen politician and acute thinker

as he was, he was a man of pleasure as well; nor could he have been more gratified than by being classed, as one of his friends has classed him, with those heroes at once of the senate and the *salon*, of whom Alcibiades will remain the dazzling and perennial type. Diplomacy would have afforded George Smythe just the career of which he was ambitious; and it is difficult to repress the idea that, when, after the reading of Lord Monmouth's will, Mr. Disraeli makes Sidonia suggest to Coningsby the diplomatic profession, he had not in mind the special case of his friend. His father—whom Byron has immortalized in the couplet,

"Hibernian Strangford, with thine eyes of blue,

And boasted locks of red or auburn hue,"

—the translator of Camœns, was our ambassador at Sweden; and it was his father whom, both in tastes and appearance, George Smythe was thought chiefly to resemble. "One would scarcely have expected," continues the correspondent of whose letter I have above availed myself, "sentences so stirring and epigrams so strong from a form as slight and delicate as Smythe's. Never was a man, to judge from his exterior, less adapted for the rude atmosphere of a popular assembly. Thoroughly to enjoy his eloquence it was necessary to sit close to him, and watch the varied play of feature—the ever-changing expression responsive to each successive sentiment of his speech. Yet animated, excited, even as he often obviously was, he never lost a perfect self-control, and invariably conveyed a sense of suppressed power. His voice was of great flexibility and compass, and only after a long effort did it languish. Towards the close of his life it became chronically weak, as might be expected from the malady which killed him; but in the early days its clearness was as unrivalled as was the youthfulness of his look—a feature which he retained even to the last."

Lady Strangford has told the story of George Smythe's life very well, and she has been well advised, on the whole, in publishing "*Angela Pisani*." One

need not here minutely examine a work which is not so much a novel as a kaleidoscopic series of scenes taken from the drama that was being enacted in London and Paris, and on the battlefields of Europe, at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century, and which has already been noticed at due length in the daily and weekly press. "*Angela Pisani*" is a romance without a hero, and a story without a plot. But it abounds in powerful descriptions, and in very elaborate writing. Its style is overladen with ornament. There is an excessive fondness, which becomes wearisome, shown for recondite historical allusion, though there is no special advocacy of the Neo-Anglican ideas, as there is none of the personality of Mr. Disraeli's fictions. Yet there runs a strong vein of human interest throughout; and, fantastic as they are in some of their developments, Charles Denain and Lionel Averanche are not mere barber's blocks. We have in "*Historic Fancies*" the rough material of "*Angela Pisani*." The influence of Mr. Disraeli is very visible in the mould of the sentences, in the perpetually-recurring paradoxes and epigrams, and in the esoteric sense in which certain words are used. There is, it may be said, internal evidence to show that the book was written between 1845 and 1847—that is, when George Smythe was not more than thirty. It is no discredit to his genius that "*Angela Pisani*" shows how largely the spirit of Bulwer and Alfred de Musset had entered into him.

George Smythe must have left much behind him quite as well worth publishing as this novel. If Lady Strangford, or some other competent editor, were to collect his speeches, were to supplement them with some of his literary and political essays written between 1847 and 1852, and were to introduce the volume with a more ample biography—perfect model of its kind as Lady Strangford's memoir is—it would be a monument neither without attraction nor value, of a gifted man and an interesting period.

T. H. S. ESCOTT.

CASTLE DALY:

THE STORY OF AN IRISH HOME THIRTY YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ELLEN mounted the stairs to Anne's room with a much less tranquil mind than she had carried in coming down. The prospect of danger to Connor five or six weeks hence was a different thing from the thought of his being in peril now, perhaps at this hour; and yet, so completely was she imbued with his spirit, that she could not help a vague feeling of exhilaration stealing in among her fears. She had heard the question asked so often in eloquent speech or verse—"Has the time come?" that the thought "It has come, then, at last," sent a thrill through her nerves. She hardly asked herself "The time for what?" The glowing words and burning verse had raised a mist before her, through which she could only see that something was to be nobly dared for Ireland, and the consequences lay beyond, hidden by the halo that appeared to surround the effort. Anne was asleep when she re-entered the room, so she took her writing-case to a table in the window, to begin her letter. The writing it took a long time, for she had to frame her sentences cautiously, so as to appeal to considerations most likely to weigh with Connor, and yet not startle him by seeming to ask too much. She thought it better to avoid any allusion to Mr. Thornley, as Connor would think of him only as a cunning enemy to the cause, and might even in his vanity consider his cautions a stratagem to deprive the movement of his valuable presence and aid at its most critical moment. As she wrote, fear and sickening anxiety for Connor predominated, and put out the will-o'-the-wisp light of excitement, and she was often obliged to lay aside her pen and calm herself by looking over the quiet

valley. How many mothers and sisters and friends might there not be throughout Ireland employed just then like herself, scheming with sick hearts to hold back their dearest from rushing on destruction; or, more painfully yet, battling within themselves between the martyr spirit that urged them on to let go, and the cry of the heart that bade them hold back! Oh, if the right and the wrong were only quite clear to her mind, how much easier action would be! If she could feel sure that this effort about to be made for restoring nationality to Ireland was not only hopeless, but wrong. That it was hopeless was not, she thought, enough to urge against it; so many apparently hopeless causes had been gained in the end. Had not Gideon gone out to victory with three hundred chosen men, and Tell with three; and had not Bruce landed with his friend, the two of them on the shore at Arran over there, to save Scotland from wearing that Nessus garment of shame, the consciousness of being a conquered country, which clung to Ireland and eat into her vitals yet? It was not reason enough to urge for holding back that the cause was hopeless. But, might it not be true that the days were past when such struggles had the help of Heaven; that the time for smiting with the sword had gone by, and bloodless moral victories were those alone on which Heaven smiles now? And then on Ellen's memory there rose a vision of a scene she had witnessed in her childhood, when her father had taken her to Clifden to hear Daniel O'Connell harangue a countless multitude gathered on the green hill-sides, and along the shores of the blue fiord that there indents the coast, on his favourite scheme of raising Ireland to the rank of an independent

nation again, through the majestic force of its people's united will, peacefully expressed. She saw again the genial, beaming, grand face of the speaker raised above the throng, the thousand faces turned one way, all with an intent, sympathetic look upon them; she heard the deep, acquiescing shout that greeted every pause in his speech. Was it all wasted feeling, wasted eloquence? Were the thousands of hearts that had all but attained the fever-heat of enthusiasm that moulds an inspired nation to sink back into units again, unable to act on the impulses that moved them most deeply? *That* seemed to Ellen, just then the saddest tragedy of all—a worse death than any other dying. To weave ropes of sand eternally that bind nothing; to struggle and rage unceasingly and bring forth nothing! Were not Connor and his friends perhaps right to try to create some spark of life, if it were only the galvanic spark that moves a corpse? Or was it better to bow meekly before the Inevitable, trusting to the Guiding Hand, of God and to confidence inspired by faith in Him, that no unselfish effort shall fail utterly, but that even in dying it shall find a new body prepared for it, a fruit unlooked for, something different from and beyond what the flower promised. In the far future Ireland's past struggles and woes, and those of other nations as ill-fated, might have some such unforeseen solution—in the grand gathering up times, when not nationality, but something larger and higher, shall be the bond uniting the peoples of the earth together—it may be that the nations and races who have suffered most and drained the cup of humiliation to the dregs will be found (having learned most from suffering) capable of the grandest work for the whole, and will be preferred to the highest places, and crowned with crowns of dominion. Then would the names of those who from afar had foreseen the glory, but never entered into it, who had refused to give up hope, who had worshipped at the cradle of worth, be remembered again, and honoured and worn in all the glad hearts.

It was late when the letter was finished, and Ellen resolved not to trust it in the hands of Malachy, who usually took the letters from Good People's Hollow to meet the post-car that passed in the early morning on the road between Westport and Ballyowen.

She believed him quite capable, in the case of a letter from Connor, of exercising a right of investigation, and speeding or retarding its despatch, according to his own approval of the contents. She had meant to return to Eagle's Edge early on the next day, and as she could reach the point where Murdock usually intercepted the car by making a circuit of a few miles on her way home, she resolved to be her own letter-carrier, and took leave of Anne when she wished her good night.

During the summer of Miss O'Flaherty's illness, Ellen had been in the habit of taking the long walk between Eagle's Edge and the Hollow at almost all hours of the day, from early morning till late evening; she knew the shortest cuts across the mountains, and had her favourite resting-places under sheltering rocks by the side of lonely mountain tarns; or in ferny nooks of the valleys fragrant with woodbine, when the sunshine lay hot on the hill-sides, and the shaded hollows were the most inviting. The divergence from her usual route to meet the car would prolong her walk by an hour or so, and she determined to set out very early before any of the household were up. It was the dim grey hour before sunrise when she stole softly down the staircase with her letter and the key of the front door in her hand, and she felt some surprise at perceiving she was not the earliest riser. There were sounds of some one stirring down stairs, and when she had let herself out of the house, she came upon Murdock Malachy limping round the corner from the back premises. He started at sight of her, and seemed disposed to slink away without his customary "Top of the morning to 'ye, Miss Eileen," but thinking better of it, he ran after her and caught her up as she was crossing the bridge.

"It's early ye're setting out for yer walk this morning, Miss Eileen dear," he said, looking into her face wistfully; "the paths up the mountains are bad for such feet as yours, wid the dew thick on them. Ye'd a dale better go back to the house and wait an hour till the sun's up. The girls are setting to work to make hot bread for breakfast this morning, and fit to break their hearts they'll be if there's no one to ate it, such a sin as it is to waste the good food this year."

"But I must go home, Murdock. I intend to be at Eagle's Edge long before breakfast-time to superintend the bread-making for my mother's breakfast. You'll easily find somebody to eat my share of the Indian-meal cakes you have learned to make so well at the Hollow."

"The path across Lac-y-Core is the road ye're taking this morning, Miss Eileen, then, if you must go, you'll find it the driest and most convenient by a long way."

"Thank you, Murdock. I've come so often to the Hollow on foot lately that there's little chance of my losing my way, whichever path across the mountains I take."

He did not seem satisfied she thought, and when she had crossed the valley and was half way up the steep road that led out of Anne's domain, she looked back and saw him still leaning with his elbows on the bridge-rail looking after her. The mist lay thick in the Hollow, but a little group of cabins on the hill-side had caught the first rays of the rising sun, and stood out distinct against the sky, and Ellen saw through the low doors, one, two, three, four figures of men creeping out. She stood still to watch them. They did not disperse into their little patches of garden ground on the slope of the hill or to the pastures where the cows were feeding. They turned to the mountains and began to climb, taking the direction she herself was following, and when she had reached the highest point of the path, and began to descend towards the main road, looking down she saw

another frieze-coated figure striding along through the mist before her. Early as it was there was an unusual stir, as if others beside herself had found the summer night too long, and were impelled to be beforehand in meeting what the day was bringing. Ellen was not afraid to meet any of these people. No one would hurt her on these lonely mountain sides, but the sense of expectation to which their alertness testified, excited her and made her press eagerly on her way, longing to have despatched her letter and to be at home. She did not pause to rest till she was close upon the hamlet where the post-car stopped to change horses, and there she discovered that she was considerably more than an hour too early, and must find a convenient place to wait in till the car appeared. The road along which she was walking skirted the side of a hill, at whose foot the little hamlet lay, and, looking upwards, Ellen saw a peat pile conveniently placed for shelter, with one or two fallen sods at its base, arranged so as to make a comfortable arm-chair to rest in. She took off her bonnet and drew her cloak over her head, when she had established herself in this nook, for the morning air was chilly still. The mountain tops were beginning to grow red in the sunlight, but the mist lay in long curling wreaths along their sides and brooded over the valley. From where Ellen sat it was like looking down into a sea of moving quicksilver, which, swaying and parting now and again, showed glimpses of what lay beneath—the church spire, with its vane catching the sunbeam, the straggling street of cabins, many of them deserted and roofless now, the small wayside inn where the car stopped. The churchyard crowded with graves and sloping up the hill-side to the edge of the road, was the object nearest Ellen and the one that looked most real. She amused herself by making out the boundary lines of its inclosure, and observing how, minute by minute, as the sun rose higher and the mist rolled back, the shapes of the crosses and head-

stones by the graves grew clearer. Was it a funeral that was going on there below at this time of day; it was hardly possible and yet it was clear that some ceremony was being enacted in that least-frequented corner by the north wall just below her feet. There was a group of figures moving, and some of them appeared to be stooping over an open grave. Were they mourners, or what had drawn that little band of frieze-coated men together in the misty morning twilight? Ellen thrust herself further under the shelter of the peat wall, and her heart almost ceased beating with horror as her eyes, grown accustomed to the scene made out more and more clearly what was going on below. Dreadful stories she had heard of murders of supposed spies by their comrades in secret lodges, and of their subsequent interment, recurred to her mind, and made her long to hide her eyes, even while anxiety compelled her to look. They were certainly digging a grave, those two men only a yard or two below her, hastily and yet cautiously. The surface had been carefully pared away and laid in sods ready to be restored to its place, and as the trench momentarily grew wider and deeper, the bystanders began to crowd round the edge, and push eager faces forward over each other's shoulders to look in.

That was Murdock Malachy's face thrust between the arms of the diggers. What a curious expression there was on it, and on those of the other men round—flushed with joyful expectation, and yet fierce, with staring eyes that seemed longing for some dearly-loved sight long withheld! It would be terrible to think that such smiles could come on faces that had recently seen blood shed. At last there was a dull ring, as if the spade had struck some harder substance than clay. A murmur rose among the bystanders, low but intense—"Glory be to God, they're there, boys! A moment longer and we'll have them betwixt our fingers again. Pass the rope down, and hurry, in the name of God." The two men who had been digging now jumped into

the pit. A few more strokes and they were heaving something up which eager hands from above clutched. Ellen saw it distinctly; it was a coffin, rude and roughly put together, like many that had been used in the two black years of constant funerals they had passed through, but unmistakably a coffin; and when it had been placed on the ground, and a dozen hands at least were tugging at its sides and top to tear it asunder, a feeling of deadly sickness came over her, and she let her head sink on her knees, not daring to see further. What fearful fierce orgie was she witnessing? The sound of voices speaking in indifferent tones, and the words that reached her ears, reassured her by degrees.

"Look out for your own, boys; and if there are any whose spalpeens of owners ain't here to claim them, let the captain say who's to have the handling of them." "The top of the morning to the beauties; see the glint of the sun on them." "Long life to them; now we've given them a happy resurrection, may they soon have a bloody baptism, and may they niver rest in pace again till they've done their work." "Toss the ould planks back into the hole, boys; and hurry to cover them up, for the day is upon us, and it's far enough from this we'll be with these by our sides before night."

The meaning of the whole scene dawned on Ellen at the last words, and she sat up courageously and bent from her hiding-place to witness the end. The diggers, aided by many helpers, were now rapidly filling in the hole and replacing the sods on its surface; and on the ground where the coffin had lately stood lay a little pile of arms—pikes, guns, and muskets—with here and there an old sword whose handle, in spite of rust, glittered in the morning sun. When the last sod was replaced, two men who had hitherto stood on the outskirts of the crowd came a little forward, and standing on the re-filled grave, began to hand out the arms. Their backs were turned to Ellen, but though no word was spoken while the

distribution lasted, she knew perfectly well who they were. The taller of the two picked up the last of the muskets, stepped to the front, and spoke a few words in a low voice, distinct enough, however, for Ellen to distinguish every word:—

"Boys—brothers, the sun is up and we must disperse for a few more hours of silence and hiding; a few hours more and then we'll meet again, please God, never to part till our work is done. We're fewer this morning than I thought we should be; but what of that? we feel like men now with arms in our hands. Hundreds all over Ireland are doing this hour what we have done, and in a little while we'll all be together—all the brave, true men that famine and oppression have left in the land. If our hearts are one, few or many, we'll be enough for what we have to do, boys. Now go home quietly, for you have each a treasure beyond price to guard—the weapon with which you are to strike for your country. We must not shout, but we'll stand silent together for a moment; and vow all of us low in our hearts, with this morning's sunlight on our heads, that we'll never cease the struggle till the night of oppression and wrong in Ireland is past, and the daylight of liberty bright over our land."

A dead silence, that yet seemed to Ellen to throb with emotion, followed when the eloquent voice ceased, and then there was a shuffling of feet and steps moving away in different directions, and in a few seconds more the churchyard was deserted by all but the two young men who had last spoken. These two, when the frieze-coated figures had all disappeared, passed through a gate of the churchyard that opened on the hill-side path, and stood for a few minutes talking together directly under Ellen's hiding-place.

"A mere handful of men," she heard Connor's voice say; "hardly worth the risk of our coming here to look them up. We had better have gone at once to join the main body in the South."

"If we only knew that by this time

there is a main body," answered D'Arcy O'Donnel, in a desponding tone that struck Ellen in contrast with the hopeful words he had so lately spoken.

"You are not doubting it surely?"

"No, no; but don't you feel a deadness? If things were going according to our hopes, I fancy we should feel it even here and now. There would be a thrill in the air all over Ireland, instead of this blank, that somehow, struggle against it as I will, weighs on me. The spirit of this district has changed since we were here last—only that handful!"

"But the notice has been so short. The few we have seen will whisper it about that we are here, and you will see what a gathering there will be at Dennis Malachy's old still to-night."

"Your henchman Murdock seems dispirited, however."

"Yes, and I'm sorry to see it, for he's a shrewd fellow. He says it's John Thornley's influence and Miss Maynard's money and kindness that have worked the change. O'Roone was harrying the boys into a ripe state for rebellion. I wish I had spared my precious journey to London, and never sent that little witch, Miss Lesbia, to lull them into ignominious prosperity and content."

"My despair is to think that such a slight relaxation of misery should be enough to lull them into inaction. If it should be the same story everywhere—but we at least must not lose heart. Now for disposing of the next twelve hours. Shall we go at once to our quarters in the old still, or do you hold to your intention of hanging about Eagle's Edge for the chance of a sight of Ellen? You said something of it."

"In a sentimental mood. If I thought I could have a word with Ellen."

"Here, Connor dear, here!" and letting the cloak fall from her head, Ellen stepped down from her hiding-place on to the path and threw her arms round Connor's neck. "I have been watching you all the time from that seat under the peat cone on the hill," she said, in answer to their looks of dumb astonishment. "I left the Hollow before daybreak to walk

home, meaning to catch the mail-car there, and post a letter to forbid your coming home, you wicked, dangerous conspirators, and fate has turned me into a secret spy and witness of your treason. I have only to go straight to Mr. Thornley, or old O'Roone, and inform against you, to have you both put out of the way of further harm ; safe in prison for six months."

"We'll trust her, won't we, D'Arcy?" cried Connor joyfully. "May we never have a spy among us false to the cause ; but to think of your being there, and my first wish this morning granted before it was well out of my mouth. If that's not a good omen for the enterprise, D'Arcy, I don't know what we'll want to heighten our hopes."

"Or give us something better," said D'Arcy, who had not yet spoken ; "when first and last wishes are granted, one is ready for whatever comes." Ellen shook hands with him in silence. The glance she had into his face told her that the last six months had altered him greatly. The bright enthusiastic countenance that had made such an impression on Connor when first seen a year ago was much worn now, and lined with anxious thought and mental suffering, young as it was. There was the same resolution upon it, but no longer the inspired look of hope ; a degree of disappointment and awakening had evidently come to him, not sufficient, unhappily, to turn him from his purposes, but to send him forward with the determination of a man bound by honour to a desperate attempt rather than with the expectation of victory that is such an element in success. Ellen's heart was almost as full of pity for him as of anxiety for Connor, whose lighter nature sent him into danger without misgiving, full of the excitement of the moment, and eager for action of any kind. They turned and began to climb the hill, as the quickest route by which they could escape observation from the road, along which the mail-car was coming ; and when they had gained the summit, and were looking across the valley towards Eagle's Edge, Ellen said, "Come home

to spend the day. - Our house is nearer at hand than the old still, and you would sooner be sheltered. It is getting late for you to be abroad, if you don't want to be seen. You might meet Darby O'Roone himself on your road to the still, and the Green-coats seem to have multiplied tenfold during this last week, and to be about everywhere."

"But Pelham and my mother?"

"Pelham is from home to-day ; he has gone to Galway on business, and mamma won't be very much surprised at your sudden appearance, for I told her your last letter held out a hope of your coming. If things should so turn out that you are not able to visit us again for a long time, this one day will be something for us all to look back upon and be glad of."

"What do you say, D'Arcy?"

"I say that if your sister will take the risk of sheltering us after what she has seen this morning, the day will be, as she says, something to be glad of for ever after, wherever in space we take the recollection of it to."

"Come, D'Arcy, don't be tragic. The day is to be a jolly day. Mind you, Ellen, no entreaties or tears from anyone, or I'll not put myself in the way of them ; and, Eileen aroon, there's no trickery in your thoughts? Swear to me you're not beguiling us home to get us into a trap, and keep us from fighting."

"No, Connor, no ; I dare not, however much I may wish I could keep you out of harm's way. I know that there are things that would make life worthless, and I have no right to force dishonour on you or D'Arcy. Whatever the consequence of keeping your pledges may be, I can believe that nothing would be so hard for you as breaking them."

"That's right. She's a true Irish-woman, is she not, D'Arcy? Now take hold of hands, and let us have a race down the hill. Why, is not this the place we used to call Bogberry Gap, when we were children—the furthest point of our bogberry-gathering excursions from Castle Daly? Ah! and look,

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D'Arcy, before we begin to descend; that blue glimmer down there in the south-east is the head of our own lake, and there against the green hill you can just make out the Castle towers. I wonder what Miss Lesbia is thinking of down there this minute; not of me, at any rate, the stony-hearted little flirt! She'll not have me risking my neck to get a sight of her this summer, anyhow. Ireland's my mistress to-day, and it's all the one I'll ever have to trouble my head about, hurrah!"

Thanks to Connor's gay spirits and determination to keep serious topics out of sight, the day at Eagle's Edge passed pleasantly, and even gaily, in conversation that chiefly turned on reminiscences of childish times, in discussing which D'Arcy grew as eager and interested as the two who had been concerned in them. They did not leave the house all day, but sat together in Mrs. Daly's favourite room at the back of the house, looking away from the road. Ellen did not know whether or not her mother was aware that any special cause for anxiety respecting Connor existed; but she seemed to take unusual pleasure in his company that day, and would hardly let him stir from the sofa by her side, but sat holding his hand as if he had been Pelham. Ellen tried to keep the two servants out of the room as much as possible, for all through the day she had an uneasy feeling that something unusual was going on outside the house. It might be far away, it might be near; but even in that secluded nook of the world there were signs of hurry and excitement. The high road, usually so quiet, had many passers on it, and countrymen and women, wearing troubled anxious faces, came up to the house, on what Ellen felt were sham errands, and in spite of all she could say to dismiss them, lingered by the windows, or stood leaning against the kitchen door, staring into the house. Long before the sun set she began to wish that the day and the parting were over. Mrs. Daly, worn out with talk, fell asleep late in the afternoon; and Connor, leaving D'Arcy busy writing out an address, of

No. 187.—VOL. XXXII.

which his mind was full, went with Ellen into the wide low passage that divided the house, and stood at the back door looking forth. The farmyard on which the back door opened was for the moment free of intruders, and had no tenants but its rightful occupants—long-eared Connaught pigs routing with their long noses among the straw, and hen-mothers cackling and scratching for the benefit of their broods. Connor amused himself for a few minutes by aiming bits of turf at the head of a slumberous sow, and raising false expectations among the feathered heads of families by sending showers of gravel in their neighbourhood; but his face grew graver and more absent as he went on, and as he tossed away the last sod, he turned to Ellen with a more serious look than his face had worn all day.

"Well," he began, "have those two made it up yet?"

"What two?"

"Oh, you know; Pelham and Lesbia. You need not have been afraid to tell me, and I think I have a right to know all about it if any one has."

"I should not have been a bit afraid, I assure you; but there's nothing to tell. Connor, can't you understand how it is? We're getting poorer and poorer; the three years of famine have fairly ruined us at last. There has not been a shilling of rent paid on the estate except for the Castle itself, and the creditors who hold mortgages on the land would have seized everything long since if Mr. Thornley had not paid the money and taken possession of their claims, on Lesbia's account, I believe; so that now every inch of the property, and even the Castle itself, belongs virtually to her. Can Pelham go a beggar to Lesbia and say, give me back my inheritance and yourself too? It would be too barefaced."

"I don't see that. I'd have taken it all, if she would have given it to me, as kindly as the sunshine, and would have been proud to owe it to her, the kind-hearted, sparkling, little jewel of a girl, that she is! Pelham's just a dull, clod—worthy of his name to haggle so long over the bargain. Now I'll tell

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you what I'll do to give him a lift out of the bog of his own obstinacy. D'Arcy is a thought down-hearted to-day, and of course there's no denying that we are risking our necks and may come to grief, the whole lot of us. If this is to be the last you ever see of me, I'd like to have done something for you before I vanish from the scene for evermore. When we were at Whitecliffe, and Miss Maynard was no heiress, but the little scrub you all looked down upon, I sent her a love-poem of my own, that must have shown her what I thought about her, and moreover had verses in it that D'Arcy himself would not need to be ashamed of—well, I'll turn over the whole credit of the thing to Pelham. Let him give her to understand that he sent it, and if, with that proof of the disinterestedness of his love to put before her, he daren't go and claim a return, he's a greater dolt than even I take him for."

"But, Connor dear, I'm afraid Pelham won't choose to woo in borrowed plumes, even if he thinks the poem worth offering in exchange for all the Castle Daly estates and their present mistress; and he won't do that, for he is not you!"

"The more shame, then, for him for a money-weighing Saxon, who does not know how to honour the bard; but you'll tell him, if I never see him again, how I wished at the last to wipe out old scores, and help to lift him up into all I would like well enough to have for myself. Heigho! D'Arcy's forebodings have taken hold of me. I did not think to feel like this the evening before we marched; the eve of Ireland's resurrection, that we've been looking to, and writing and singing of these two years."

"D'Arcy is full of forebodings, then?"

"Yes; it has been growing on him all the summer—no shrinking, but a presentiment of failure, and—I don't mind saying it to you—a doubt of the wisdom of the course of action resolved upon by the other leaders."

"Then why not withdraw, you and he? How I wish you would!"

"How could he, when his words, beyond any one's, have urged it on? And for myself, where he goes I go,

proud enough and glad enough to throw my life on the same cast that decides his. If he is to go down in the game, I'd be just ashamed to stand up safe; that's all about it with me. He says that the great bane of Ireland, the cause of all her failures, has been the dissensions among patriots and their lack of fidelity to each other, and that if half-a-dozen of us stick together to the last, in the bitterest moments of failure, we shall have done something to make the next attempt successful."

"But you ought to be prepared for emergencies. You may have to fly the country for your lives. Connor, have you any money?"

"Not a rap, either of us; there has been no pay from our newspaper for many weeks, for its issue has been stopped, and every penny you last sent me has gone in the club expenses. We are cleaned out. D'Arcy says it does not matter, since we have hands and brains; but I confess that was one reason why I wanted to get a word with you this morning."

"We have a few pounds left in the chest up stairs, and I am sure mamma and Pelham will gladly let you have them; and it came into my mind this morning that I have two trinkets of value, which I should like to give you. One is the diamond ring that papa wore when he died. Pelham gave it to me. Keep it if you possibly can, but don't scruple to part with it to procure you means of living. The other trinket I thought of is an emerald hoop-ring that Marmaduke Pelham gave me on my birthday the year we stayed at Pelham Court. Do you think D'Arcy would take it from me if I offered it as a farewell present when we part? It is worth several pounds, and might be of use to him if he wanted to get away."

"He would take it from you, but it would not answer the purpose you have in your mind. I should be sorry to think of his ever being in such straits as to be willing to part with it again."

"You don't know what may happen. Wait here till I come back."

Ellen was half way down the pas-

sage on her way to her room when a loud knock at the front door of the house startled her. She ran back to Connor pale and breathless.

"What shall we do? The door must be opened at once, or they will come round here, whoever they are, and see you."

"Where can we go to be out of the way?"

"Mamma's bedroom will be the best place, for it can only be reached through the sitting-room, where mamma is sleeping. Go there at once, and call D'Arcy, softly, to follow you as you pass through. Take care not to awaken mamma, if you can possibly help it."

"Right! I'll go; but don't frighten yourself. Perhaps it's little Lesbia herself; and I'll court her for Pelham, and settle it all before I go."

The knock came again, before Connor's sentence was completed, and he walked towards the sitting-room, while Ellen flew down the hall, and stood before the door to secure its not being opened by the servant till the minute necessary for his disappearance had elapsed. When she lifted the latch she was confronted by two men in the dress of police-officers, and saw in the distance two more, mounted, and holding the horses of their companions at the gate. Their faces were strange to her, and so was the accent in which they asked—

"Does Mr. Pelham Daly live here?"

"Yes," Ellen answered, "but he is from home. Your business, whatever it is, must wait till his return. Mr. Daly's mother, who lives with him, has lately been very ill, and must not be disturbed or alarmed on any account."

"Very sorry, miss, but we have a warrant to search the house for arms, and time presses. We are obliged to do our duty."

"I am sure you will do it as considerately and quietly as possible then," Ellen answered, her courage rising with the greatness of the peril. "To prove the truth of my words and the necessity for quiet, I will take you into the room

where my sick mother is asleep; and if you will stay there quietly, I will myself bring you the few arms we have in the house. I feel sure you will find there has been a mistake in your being sent here. Mr. Pelham Daly's loyalty has never been suspected."

"We have nothing to do with that, you see, miss. We have only to obey orders."

"Follow me, then, softly, if you please."

Ellen led the way to the little sitting-room at the back of the house, and, opening the door, noiselessly stepped back for the men to enter. The sight of Mrs. Daly tranquilly asleep on the sofa, with her worn, white cheek resting on her thin jewelled hand, had quite as much effect on the intruders as she expected when she brought them there. They drew back a little from the door, and looked at each other sheepishly.

"No need for us to go in there, miss," the elder of the two said, carefully scanning Ellen's face as he spoke; "I will stand in the hall, and my mate will go round the house with you. Stay, though, for form's sake, I'll step inside and take a seat till you come back."

Ellen feared that some sudden look of relief on her face had caused this change of purpose, and her heart sank, but she did not dare to object. She pointed silently to a seat near the door, and then led the man, followed by the younger officer, to Pelham's bedroom, where there was a case of pistols and a gun leaning against the wall. These the man secured, and carried into the hall, opening the doors of the other rooms, and looking in as he stepped backwards and forwards. Then he asked to be shown the servants' rooms; and Ellen led him a bewildering circuit through cross passages and empty rooms that brought him out to the front of the house again.

"It's a vast dreary place for so few people to live in; I wonder you like it," the man remarked, shrugging his shoulders, as he looked up at the reeking damp-stains and forlorn shreds

of paper hanging from the wet walls. "We should pull such a worn-out old pile down in my country, and build up a snug farmhouse in its place."

"It was not too large for us once," Ellen said; "and since the famine it would be as difficult to find people to pull it down as to fill it."

"True enough; it's all a strange sight to us. We've been sent over from England to help to keep the people over here quiet, as we supposed; and, as far as we've seen, there don't seem to be no people about; nothing but ruined villages and waste lands as we can see. I'll take these here pistols away with me, by your leave, miss; you'll have no need of them now we're here to keep the peace; and I'll trouble you no further but to go round and tell my mate I'm ready to go."

Long as the time had seemed to Ellen, the inspection had in reality only occupied a few minutes. Mrs. Daly was still asleep when she reached the door of the sitting-room, and the police-officer, in the same spot where she had left him, was occupied in replacing a bulky pocket-book, whose contents he had apparently been examining, into the pocket of his coat. At Ellen's sign, he came out into the passage, and met her with a smile of satisfaction on his face that she could not understand.

"You need not have alarmed yourself, miss; we've done no harm, you see," he remarked, when Ellen gave him his comrade's message.

"I don't know how it may be in your country," Ellen answered, "but here lonely women do not expect to be intruded on when the master of the house is away."

"We were sorry to disturb you, miss, but we had our orders; and when all things come to be looked into, I fancy you'll find that we have only done what was necessary, and taken away what it was our business to take. Good-day to you."

Ellen followed the man to the door, and watched the little cavalcade, as it wound along the road, till it was lost behind the hill; then she ran back into

the sitting-room, and threw herself on her knees by her mother's sofa. Never had she been so thankful for anything in her life as that Mrs. Daly's afternoon slumber had been so deep and lasted so long; and then so strange did it seem that those white lids should have remained closed so long with no weightier seal than that of sleep upon them, that a sudden fear seized her, and she stooped and pressed her lips on her mother's eyes to assure herself that the warmth of life was in them still. Mrs. Daly started up awake at last.

"My dear, have I slept too long? Where are Connor and D'Arcy? You have not let them go without saying good-bye to me?"

"No, dear mamma," Ellen said, struggling hard to speak naturally; "but I am not sorry I have awakened you, for I think the time when they will have to say good-bye has nearly come."

"Then make Molly bring some tea. We must not let them start on their walking tour fasting. You should have wakened me sooner."

And when, at the sound of her voice, Connor and D'Arcy appeared from the next room, she began so eagerly to urge their remaining for another meal, that nothing struck her as unusual in their look or manner. Ellen slipped away to hasten the appearance of the supper, and stop the clack of tongues among the servants, and in a few minutes D'Arcy and Connor followed her to exchange hand shakes and looks of congratulation, since they could not venture on words.

"True as steel," Connor whispered; "did not I know you would be?"

"It was instinct, not reason," Ellen answered; "and oh, Connor avourneen, I hope—I hope I have done right, and not wrong by you. Perhaps I shall have to regret it all my life; for I believe you would be safer if you were now riding away a prisoner with those men, who are looking for you, than you will ever be again when you have left this house; yet I did not even think of betraying you."

"And you may take this for your

comfort, that if you had, and the fighting had come off while I was locked up, I'd have revenged myself on you by blowing my brains out the very first day I was set at liberty. Nothing but that and the haunting afterwards would have equalled your deserts."

D'Arcy seemed disposed to linger over that last meal in Mrs. Daly's little sitting-room; but Connor, who was struggling to keep up his spirits to nonsense-pitch to the last moment, and signally failing every now and then, was in haste to be gone. Their plan was to wait at the old still till midnight, and then march southward with the comrades, who were to join them there, confidently expecting that before the morning dawned they should find themselves at the head of such a force that only an organised body of troops would attempt to stop their progress.

"The true-hearted among the soldiers will come out and join us," Connor averred to Ellen, when, after tea, she came into the hall with him to slip the little purse of money she had got together into his soldier's knapsack.

"But supposing no one joins 'you at the still to-night?' she asked.

"We shall go alone to Tipperary," D'Arcy, who was standing near, answered. "I read what you are thinking in your face. The domiciliary visits, of which we have had a specimen, show greater alertness on the part of the authorities than we expected, and it is possible that very many arrests on suspicion have been made to-day, and that most of those who sympathise with us about here are put out of the way of helping us; but we two have escaped for the present, and an hour or two's travelling will take us among our friends who will have had better luck than ourselves. At all events, we are determined to show among them, however it may be going."

"And how shall I know how it is going?"

"It will be in the air; no fear of your not knowing."

Ellen now rose from her knees by the knapsack, and D'Arcy came near and took her hands in his.

"I have been asking myself all day," he said, "whether I am most glad or most sorry for the circumstances that make my individual fate of no special consequence to any human being. When the doubt that for the last six weeks has been growing upon me predominates, I can conscientiously say I am glad, and even thankful, to you for leaving me the lonely man I am. If, as I begin to fear, a glorious struggle even is denied to us, and only the bitter dregs of ignominious failure given to us to wring out, it will be something in the torture of it to know that my share of the shame and ridicule that will be cast on us will weigh on no one but myself; that I can be tossed away as a tool broken from all its uses without involving any other life in the ignominious ruin."

"No, D'Arcy, no," Ellen said, looking up to him with eyes full of tears; "you can't, you must not say so, or you will break our hearts. You are a brother to Pelham and me almost as dear as Connor, and whatever happens to you, and wherever you go, our thoughts and our love will follow you; and not only ours, but those of the hundreds whose hearts your words have touched, and who will have better or worse hopes for Ireland all their lives as you prove yourself strong or weak in whatever comes. Here, I want you to take a token from me—a little bit of 'the green' that is to pledge you not to throw your life away in any moment of bitterness, but to keep it for Ireland's service when the way of serving her best is clearer to us all."

Ellen took Marmaduke Pelham's ring from her finger as she spoke and put it into D'Arcy's hands, who tried to speak in answer, but failed, and after stooping down and pressing the lips that trembled too much for speech on the hands he still held, he walked away down the hall, and leaned against the open door of the house, till Connor came from the inner room, where he had been taking leave of his mother, to join him. A slender silver thread of the waxing harvest moon was beginning to show in the sky when the young men left the house arm in arm,

and crossing the level space at the back, were soon climbing the side of Lac-na-Weel. Ellen watched them till they were no more than black specks against the green, and then went back to sit by her mother's sofa, and listen with a heavy foreboding heart to her regrets at Connor's wandering habits, and thankfulness that Pelham was different, and could be trusted always to stay by her. What should she do if anything ever happened to take Pelham away?

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"No, Wattie, there is no use in your trying to play tricks on me about the letters now, because if you do I shall feel obliged to send you back to Whitecliffe, and take away the gun and sword I gave you when you came here," said Lesbia, looking up with dignity from behind the silver tea urn she was presiding over, at her little cousin who was executing an insulting war dance before her face, with the letter-bag concealed behind his back. "I can't think how it is that you don't learn to treat me with more respect, Wattie, now that you are staying with me at Castle Daly, and I am so kind to you and make you so many presents. Now don't you think he ought to treat me differently, John?" she continued, appealing to her brother, who stood with his back to the fire-place tranquilly watching the contest.

"I can't say. Perhaps Wattie is a clothes-philosopher, like Professor Teufelsdröckh, whose life you decline to study, and he is taking this picturesque method of expressing his conviction that nothing more respectable exists under all your toggerly than the original little Babette whom he was brought up to bully."

"I wish you would make him give up the letter-bag, however, John. Don't you want the *Times* yourself?"

"No; it will be full of the Irish rebellion, and we know more about it than they do out there."

"The Irish rebellion! Why, is there a rebellion? Has it really begun, and you stand warming your back there as

quietly as if you did not care what happened to us all?"

"I am warming my back because I have been up all night writing letters and transacting business, and I am very tired; and as for the rebellion, I believe, or at least I hope, that it is virtually over, and that throughout Ireland as about here, the active spirits who were looking forward to a general scrimmage will awake this morning in safe keeping, comfortably stowed in prison out of the way of mischief."

"Oh, John; was that what you were doing all yesterday, when you went out so early and did not get back till after dark?"

"Do you take me for a police officer? or do you suppose that I have power to realise the Roman emperor's wish, with a difference, and concentrate all the rebels in Ireland in one prison-van?"

"But you were busy all day; and John, do you know that I saw James Morris shaking his fist at you, and making the most horrid possible grimaces behind your back?"

"I hope it relieved his feelings."

"You *had* been helping to send people to prison, then, I am sure. If Connor Daly had been one of the rebels brought before you, what should you have done?"

"He was not one; but it would perhaps have been the best thing that could have happened to him if he had been, for I fear he has left Dublin. Now, Wattie, we have had enough of those antics. Give up the letter-bag to me and come to breakfast."

"You ought to be extremely anxious, if you have the least affection for your poor mother," said Lesbia reproachfully, "for there is most likely a letter from Bride in it to tell us how she is."

Under this reproof, and with the prospect of a hot scone spread with honey, which Lesbia placed before him, Wattie surrendered the bag and subsided into his breakfast, and the brother and sister, after dividing its contents, proceeded to open their budgets and impart sentences from their contents to each other.

"Mrs. Maynard is not so well, I am

sorry to say, and Bride is in despair at the prospect of the Irish rebellion coming off in her absence, Lesbia," said John.

"And oh, John," exclaimed Lesbia, "this is from Louisa Pelham, and her brother's regiment has been ordered to Galway, and she seems to think we ought to ask him to come and stay here."

"Captain Pelham will be otherwise employed than in paying visits, if there is truth in this, or foreshadowing of truth, as is sometimes the case with rumours," said John, gravely, as he ran his eye rapidly over a paragraph in a paper he had just unfolded. "This looks as if other districts had been less successful in disposing of their rebels than we have been about here. Listen: 'The following intelligence was received last evening in Dublin. The whole of the south of Ireland is in rebellion. The station at Thurles is on fire, and the rails torn up by the mob. At Clonmel the fighting is dreadful; the people arrive in masses; the Dublin Club leaders are there. The troops were speedily overpowered; many refused to act. At Kilkenny the contest is proceeding, and there, too, the mob is said to be successful.'"

"Do you think it is true, John? It sounds just like what Connor Daly expected would happen. I hope the rebels won't come here, or at all events not unless he is with them, to make them behave well to us, as he promised he would."

"Promised! What do you mean, Lesbia? Have you seen Connor Daly, lately, and where? How came he to make you such an idiotic promise? You had better tell me the truth, Lesbia, at once. Connor Daly's whereabouts may prove to be of consequence to more people than himself just now, and unacknowledged communications from him, if you have to confess to them by and by, would be very compromising to you. You had better take me into your confidence in time."

"Don't frighten me to death if you please, John, or I shall not be able to remember a word of what you want me

to tell you. There is no occasion whatever for you to put yourself into such a fuss. I have not seen Connor Daly since we left London."

"Connor Daly was never in London, as far as I know."

"No, not as far as you know, I acknowledge; but I think it is very hard that I should be made to confess things of this kind, at breakfast-time, with people looking on and listening," said Lesbia, glancing at little Walter Maynard, and beginning to sob.

"If you are afraid of Wattie we will wait till breakfast is over," John answered a little severely, and turning back to his letters he opened and read one after another with gradually increasing anxiety on his face, while Lesbia, with all disposition for breakfast taken away, sat silent behind her urn, and tried hard to work herself into a state of indignation, hot enough to enable her to withstand John's efforts to intrude into her confidence. She was not prepared for the gentleness and gravity of his manner when, after sending Wattie out of the room he came near and seated himself by her side. "Now, little one, I have not much time to spare this morning, and I am sure you will forgive me if I seem abrupt or over anxious. More important consequences may be involved in the matter we have to discuss than you, or perhaps any of us can foresee as yet, and I can't judge how to shield you most effectually unless you are quite open with me. You need not be afraid of surprising me. Bride and I have been dreading to hear it for some time past."

"Dreading to hear what Connor Daly said to me about the Irish rebellion?"

"Lesbia, I think you must understand me better than that. What I mean is that we have feared to hear that you were engaged to him."

"Then I must say that I think you are both very unkind, and that it is a shame," cried Lesbia, drawing herself away from her brother, and looking at him with tearful, flashing eyes. "You have no right to think so meanly of me as that I should have engaged myself

to Connor, or any one, secretly. I dare say you have let other people know what you believe, and put it into *their* heads to suspect me, and think poorly of me, too. It would be just like you."

"No, Babette, it would not be at all like us; and you don't in the least mean what you are saying now," John answered, smiling.

"I mean it would be just like what is always happening—just the way things fall out here—to make people misunderstand me, and fancy I like what I don't like, and take offence and be unkind to me," sobbed Lesbia.

"Come, Baby, do try to be a sensible child for once," pleaded John in despair at the sight of her tears. "Leave the general public alone and try to keep to the matter in question. We will say nothing about an engagement since the word offends you. What I require you to tell me is, what amount of understanding does at present exist between you and Connor Daly, and how you came to see him unknown to all your friends?"

"Bride says," began Lesbia, drawing away her hands from her face, and assuming an aspect of dignified reserve, "that it is extremely unbecoming in a woman to speak of—of—admiration that she does not return, and I told you of Captain Pelham's offer, which perhaps I ought not to have done. You must not expect me to betray people's feelings every time they speak of them to me."

"You would not waste my time in this fashion, Lesbia, if you knew how much depended on my getting the information I want you to give me at once. Perhaps, though, all that is immediately necessary is that you should tell me where you saw Connor Daly last, and when he made the extraordinary promise you quoted just now about protecting you during the rebellion."

"I have told you once, and you did not believe me. The last time I saw poor Connor was in London, on St. Patrick's Day, at the ball, when I wore my Limerick lace dress and the sham-

rocks, and he promised to take care of us through the rebellion when he and I were in the balcony together, just before you took me down to supper."

"What brought him to London, then?"

"He came to see me. Yes, you may look surprised, John. *You* don't think me worth all that trouble, because I am only your little sister, whom you don't think highly of; but I am not everybody's sister."

"I am not surprised at Mr. Connor Daly's taking the trouble to come to London to see you; but at his having the coolness to force himself upon you unknown to your friends. He was perfectly aware you were worth the trouble of a journey. Though he is acting the part of a fool just now, I give him credit for being quite a sufficiently wideawake young gentleman to know that."

"Yes, John, you think he cares for me only for my money; but is it not rather hard in you to be so sure of that? Why should not I count for something—just for a little something, too—with somebody; and, if I do, why should not a person forget about my money, and speak to me as another girl might be spoken to? It is not that part of Connor Daly's conduct I see any fault in."

"Yet you say you are not engaged."

"No. One is not obliged to take a person because one believes he likes one sincerely, though you do think that such a marvellous thing to happen to me. I could not accept Connor Daly's honest liking, not because he was poor and I was rich—I hate to think of that as a barrier—but because—and he found it out that night; oh, John, I am so unhappy that I can't help telling you, though you will despise me for it—because I love another person better; and he is like you, John—he can't forget about my money. Sometimes I almost hate him for thinking of that more than of me, for I know he loves me; but oftenest I feel that even if he never speaks kindly to me again I shall love him always better than any one else in the world. Bride would think

it dreadful of me to say this, and you will despise me, but I cannot help speaking. I am so unhappy."

"I am very far indeed from despising you, my dear little sister; you are a brave child for telling me the whole truth. As this is so with you, you and I must help each other to put personal thoughts out of our minds for the present. I fear that very dark times are coming on our friends. It is hard for you to hear the news I have to tell just upon this confidence, but you will have to hear it sooner or later."

"Oh, let me hear at once. Is it that Pelham—that the Dalys are in trouble about Connor?"

"They are, or will soon be, in great anxiety about Connor, for I see in one of this morning's newspapers that a proclamation has been issued offering large rewards for the arrest, on charge of high treason, of the Dublin Club leaders, and Connor Daly's name is in the list."

"Would he be hanged?"

"If he is taken and convicted of high treason he is liable to be hanged."

"But if the news in this morning's paper should prove to be correct, and the rebels are succeeding?"

"It will be the most temporary success, and every moment of it makes the case of those who incited the rising worse than before. For their sakes, as well as on every other account, we must hope and pray that it may be put down in a few hours—before there has been time for great crimes to be committed. While the alarm lasts, suspicion will be rife everywhere, and innocent people, if they have enemies, may be involved with the guilty. I have a letter here from old O'Roone. It seems that while I was at Westport yesterday, an order was sent out to search Eagle's Edge for arms, and that letters and papers of a highly treasonable character were seized by the police and brought away. O'Roone discovered—or pretended to discover—that some of the most damaging of these papers were in Pelham Daly's handwriting, and sent a warrant to arrest him late last night on

his return from Galway, where it seems he has been for two days on private business, unluckily without any knowledge. Pelham refuses to account in any way for his possession of the papers, and it has been decided to send him, with others who were arrested yesterday with arms in their hands, this morning to prison in Galway. O'Roone pleads the urgent necessity of the time and the danger of a rescue being attempted if the prisoners are allowed to remain at Ballyowen, as an excuse for this haste; but I am afraid there is spite in it, and that it shows a determination on his part to inflict as much hardship on young Daly as he can while he has the power."

"Oh, John, John, and it was for my sake that he made the O'Roones his enemies! and I was comfortably asleep in bed last night while all this was happening, and I have eaten my breakfast and talked and laughed this morning."

"Little one, you must be reasonable; you must try to keep calm, or I shall not be able to trust you. You and I must both remember that these are dear, dearest friends, but that they have not chosen we should be anything more to them, and even in this time of trial we have no right —"

"No, John, no; I won't remember any such thing. *You* may do as you like: but while they are suffering I shall not think of rights or of anything but how I can best serve them. If afterwards they should choose to despise my service, I shall not complain. I shall go quite away from them and bear it as well as I can; but I shall never be sorry that I did what I could, when every one else was against them."

"It was for you I was trying to be wise, not for myself, Babette; but I believe you are right, and that you will make no mistake in following your generous heart-instincts. I will trust you, and not hold you back in anything you wish to do. We will act together."

"But perhaps we can do nothing I talked of *afterwards*; but oh, John, perhaps there will be no afterwards;

you said a dreadful thing would happen if Connor were taken."

"And convicted of treason. But Connor has committed himself by word and writing and by participation in illegal acts, whereas there can be nothing against Pelham except these papers; and even if he refuses to explain how they came into his possession, I don't suppose anything worse can happen to him than imprisonment while the present state of things lasts, and the magistrates have power to keep suspected persons in confinement. Perhaps he may even be detained for six months, but it can't be longer."

"In prison for six months! Mrs. Daly will die of misery long before the six months are over."

"The treasonable proclamations were no doubt sent or brought to Eagle's Edge by Connor or young O'Donnel. When you spoke of Connor, I thought you might have seen him, and be able to prove that he had been in the neighbourhood lately. Perhaps the papers were sent to Ellen. Ah, I owe Pelham service indeed for the part he is acting, if it is for her sake, to keep her name from being talked of, perhaps to spare her the agony of having to testify against her lover, that he refuses to clear himself."

"I wonder if Mrs. Daly and Ellen are alone at Eagle's Edge now. How desolate they will feel!"

"The first thing to be done is for you to go to them; you must offer to bring them here, of course, if they will come. I shall ride at once to Ballyowen, see old O'Roone, and learn all I can from him. If the prisoners have not already been sent off to Galway, I will see Pelham and consult with him on what is best to be done. If I miss him in Ballyowen, I think I had better go on to Galway myself, and wait there till I can get access to him. In the present state of feeling, it may not be easy even for a person as well known as I am to communicate with prisoners supposed to be rebels; but you may tell Mrs. Daly that no efforts shall be spared. I shall go on to Dublin if I see

that anything can be done for him there."

"And John, dear John, don't think me very foolish; but if you should see him, and if he should look very unhappy, would you mind telling him that I have gone to his mother, and that I don't mean to leave her again till he is set free? I have seen him look so very much pleased when I have paid any little attention to her, that I can't help believing it would comfort him to hear that."

"Well, run and get ready; I will order the car round, and James Morris shall drive you to Eagle's Edge. He is always eager to see his former young mistress, and I will indulge him to-day, though he is an arrant rebel, and though he does make grimaces at me behind my back."

"And John, you are not angry with me about—the message?"

"No, no, I will see what can be done; but, considering all things, it is perhaps as well that Mrs. Joseph Maynard's rheumatic fever continues obstinate, and that Bride is not here to criticise our sayings and doings."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

It was well for Lesbia that she had by this time overcome the nervousness that had once made a car-ride along the rough roads round Castle Daly a painful experience, for James Morris set out on the road to Eagle's Edge at a great pace, and only relaxed his exertions to lean over from his driving seat at intervals and whisper into Lesbia's ear an emphatic assurance that she might trust him to bring her in the twinkling of an eye to them with whom her heart was; and God bless her for being in all the mad haste and the hurry she was to comfort them. The way to Eagle's Edge lay for a mile or two along the public road to Ballyowen, and by the shore of the lake, till a certain cross road leading up among the hills was reached. About a quarter of a mile before they came to this turning, Lesbia's eye was attracted

by the appearance of a little crowd of people on the summit of an eminence they were beginning to mount. They came in sight in detachments, first a bare-footed advanced guard, that appeared to be running on in front of, then turning back to gaze at, something—some procession following behind; then the heads of two files of mounted policemen, carrying arms, appeared above the crest of the hill, and between them, two and two, walked slowly a string of other men. Their figures and their motions grew distinct, as they began to descend the slope, and Lesbia perceived that they were bound together hand and foot, prisoners. James Morris drew up his horse suddenly, as the meaning of the scene dawned on him, and a fierce oath burst from his lips.

"Will we have to pass him on the road, Miss Lesbia?" he said, turning back to look at her.

"Who, James?" she asked, in a trembling voice, struggling hard to put back the recognition that every moment brought nearer. "It can't be any one we know. No one we know could be treated like that."

"It is, then; it's young Mr. Daly, and the boys who were taken yesterday for marching with their pikes across the hill. Look for yourself? It's him that goes first. Who but a Daly would hold his head up and walk like that, proud and stately, whatever they do to him? and that one wid the green coat riding near, who is stooping down to spake to him now, with the devil's own spiteful sneer on his ugly face, is the thundering villain, Darby O'Roone. May iver curse he has iver earned be paid to him to the last mite, and I can't wish him worse than that. Look for yourself, then, Miss Lesbia, dear!"

But Lesbia could not summon courage to look; her eyes were fascinated by the wild rage that convulsed her companion's face, as, throwing the reins on the horse's neck, he sprang upon the driving seat and shook both fists with impotent anger towards O'Roone; then, with a sudden change of mood, he jumped down to the

ground, and coming to the side of the car where Lesbia sat, and looking humbly in her face, said in the tone of a child making a confession, "Miss Lesbia, once Mr. Connor and I played the young master there a spiteful trick anint a dog he cared for, and now I'd like to go down on my bare knees on the road and ax his pardon. It's not 'the cause' that brings him to this. It's not that he has 'the cause' at heart like Mr. Connor; it is that he won't turn informer agin his own people to save himself. Glory be to God for that same. I'd go down on my bare knees this minute to thank him for it."

"I will get down and stand in the road, I think, James," said Lesbia, putting out a little hand to be helped from the car. "I—I—think I shall like it better."

She was trembling so that she had to lean against the side of the car to support herself as she stood, and she put up her hands to hide her face. The tramp of horse hoofs and feet came nearer and nearer. Should she look up at him as he passed? Would it be better or worse for him to meet her eyes? Would he read in them how she loved him? Would he know that it was a thousand thousand times more than it had ever been before, for seeing him thus, with gyves on his wrists, bearing insult and suffering for his brother's sake? Surely yes, and surely in that hard hour there would be some help, some warmth to his heart from knowing what filled hers to such painful overflowing. Lesbia took her hands down and stood quite upright, as her determination was made. The procession of prisoners was now nearly opposite the car, and young O'Roone had made a sign to the police-officers to stop; and jumping from his horse, was evidently preparing to address her. Lesbia walked boldly forward to meet him. He approached with a meaning look of evil triumph on his face, that filled her with disgust.

"An uncomfortable meeting this, Miss Maynard, is it not?" he drawled in an affected voice. "I fear such a sight

as this must be distressing to English eyes, but, at all events, I hope it will have the effect of reassuring you as to the tranquillity of the country. If you look round you will see how satisfactorily *all* our would-be disturbers of the peace are disposed of. Let me invite you to look round."

"Thank you," said Lesbia, "that was exactly what I was intending to do, for I have a message for a friend I see among the crowd there. Stand aside, Mr. O'Roone, if you please, and let me pass."

Then drawing her dress close round her, so that it might not touch him, Lesbia brushed past and walked up to Pelham Daly, the crowd of hangers-on instinctively making way at the sight of her rich dress and the little pale face that tried to look proud, and was only quivering with feeling.

"Mr. Daly—Pelham," she said, putting both her hands on his manacled wrists, "I am glad I have met you. I am on my way now to Eagle's Edge, to stay with your mother till she has you with her again. Can you give me any message for her that will comfort her for you?"

Pelham had only a minute before known who was near him. All through the slow march from Ballyowen his thoughts had been full of another occasion when he had traversed that same road, with a crowd of ragged observers at his back, the centre of attraction and remark to them all. He had been almost smiling at the recollection of the bitter thoughts that had been aroused in his mind by that observation then. That he should ever have thought he had anything to complain of when he was receiving a tumultuous welcome to a hospitable joyous home was a curious enough reflection to haunt him just now. He remembered that when they reached the top of the next ascent the turrets of Castle Daly would be in sight, and with the thought came a vivid picture of how the castle had looked on that particular day, as he and his uncle approached it. The front door standing wide, the shouting huzzaing crowd of servants and

tenants, his father, standing above, stretching out eager hands of welcome, and looking down into his face with loving eyes that asked for sympathy. While this vision was before him, filling his mind with regretful yearnings, he heard a voice that made him start; a timid touch caressed his hands, and looking up he met once more a beseeching look of love, that again seemed to ask admittance into his heart, not to be put back for any conventionalities, for any stubborn pride this time. His eyes filled with sudden tears, but he was not ashamed of them, he would not have cared if the whole universe had been looking on at him then. For him, at that moment, there was nothing in existence but the little white anxious face turned up to his. Love had asserted itself over the whole of his being now, and somehow he felt, and had time in that instant to feel, that it was his father, as well as Lesbia, who was calling on him to rise above the spirit of self-regarding pride, and be true to love in that hour.

"God bless you for coming to speak to me to-day. God bless you for ever, Lesbia," he said in a deep earnest voice, that every one around heard. "Tell my mother that you saw and spoke to me—nothing else—and she will be comforted for me, for she will understand that after that nothing will hurt me."

It hardly took a minute for the two sentences, and for the look between, that bound two souls so closely together that nothing outward could ever come in again to separate them. O'Roone rushed forward with a frantic oath, and ordered the march to proceed instantly. Lesbia felt herself violently thrust aside towards the edge of the road, and the minute after the cavalcade was far on its way down the side of the hill proceeding at a rapid pace; and she was standing, with her back against a stone wall, surrounded by a little crowd of people whom the rapid movement of the march had left behind. A red cloaked old crone came up, threw her arms round her neck and kissed her, and a bare-footed, bare-headed girl flung herself on her knees before her in the road,

seized her hand and covered it with kisses.

"I hope your ladyship will pardon us for touching you," the old woman said, "we know we ought not to do it, but we can't help it, for our hearts as well as yours are wid the boys they are carrying off. All the son I have is among them, and Mary there, on her knees—shure it is her own bachelor, the boy that was to have married her on Sunday, that was walking along wid him that you own, foot to foot, and wrist to wrist, wid young Mr. Daly; and it came over her to thank you for what you said to him; her boy has a mother that'll want comforting too. Shure you 'ill forgive us the freedom we've taken, that came from our hearts."

"Come to Castle Daly and talk to me about your son," Lesbia said, while the deep rich colour rushed back into her cheeks at the old woman's words, and then—she could not quite understand afterwards how she came to do such a thing, except that her heart was very full of tender yearning, and longing to comfort some one—she stooped down, and, kissing the kneeling girl on the forehead, whispered low in her ear, "You too must come and see me, and tell me all about him that was walking by Mr. Daly, and I think we shall both have them back soon."

How she finally extracted herself she hardly knew, but the people followed her to the car, and a dozen hands were raised to help her in, and busied in settling the rug about her feet, and their voices followed her with emphatic blessings to the turn of the road that led up among the quiet hills. It was a relief to be among the mountains, with only their sunshiny green heads overlooking her; for James Morris judiciously turned his back, and, with his eyes fixed on his horse's ears, whistled "The Wearing of the Green" uninterruptedly till they reached Eagle's Edge. Lesbia could lean over on the cushion of the car, and, unobserved, weep out her excitement and question the strange new joy that, in spite of anxieties

would send irresistible thrills through her. "Him that you own." Yes, it was *that* she had done. She had *owned* him; she, herself, among that ragged crowd, with his greatest enemy looking on. Poor, in danger, accused of crime, a lover whose homage would not be esteemed an honour by most people. What would Bride, what would the Pelhams, what would Aunt Joseph say to such a termination of her young lady career? It was very unlike anything she had ever planned for herself. She used to imagine giving herself away with great ceremony some day to some one whose choice would raise her in her own estimation and in the world's. Then the chief purpose of courtship had appeared to be gratification of vanity, and love had only meant homage to herself. It did not mean that now; this feeling that had come to her had no room for gratified vanity, no place for self in it, and yet how much better it was than anything she had ever known!

Her tears had been long since dried when the car drove up to the house door at Eagle's Edge, and she began to be afraid that she should bring into the house a face inconsistently joyful with the purport of her visit. There was no one at hand to take the car, and though both doors of the house stood wide open, and the sunshine was pouring in, the place had a melancholy, deserted look, as if there was no longer anything in it that anybody cared to guard. Lesbia, after knocking in vain, entered, and made her way into the sitting-room usually occupied by Mrs. Daly, and waited. Soon Ellen's face, pale and anxious, appeared at the door of the inner room, and, catching sight of Lesbia, brightened, as she came forward to shake hands with her.

"You have heard what has happened," Ellen said in a weary, hopeless voice that, coming from her, showed plainly how much she had suffered. "You know that they have taken Pelham from us, and mamma, poor mamma! it was like tearing her life away. She is sleeping now, in there. Dr. Lynch

came this morning; he set out from the Hollow as soon as the news reached them there, and was with us early, or I don't know what I should have done. He gave mamma an opiate, and she is sleeping quietly at last; but I dread what her waking will be. I can't keep her from thinking the very worst. She will not believe that she shall ever see him again."

"Let me go to her when she wakes," said Lesbia; "I have something to tell her that will comfort her. Dear Ellen, only think, I met him on the road just now, and spoke to him, and he gave me a message to bring here."

Ellen did not think the circumstance of this meeting so important or consoling as to warrant the look of blushing exultation with which Lesbia announced it; but she was disposed to catch at any comfort that came, and make the most of it.

"You actually saw Pelham, did you, Lesbia? Well, I believe there will be some comfort for mamma in your having seen him this morning. It will convince her that he was safe and well up to the time when you met him. And yet she was dreading to know that he had actually left the neighbourhood. Dr. Lynch promised her that she should go to Ballyowen to be near him if she would try to sleep and get strong enough."

"They have gone to Galway."

"That is too far for us to follow. I could not go so far from Anne O'Flaherty in the state she is now."

"But if I were with your mother, could not she and I go to Galway together? You would trust me to take care of her, would you not? I—I promised your brother just now that I would stay with you and her till he was restored to you, and he was glad; he said, 'Nothing would hurt him knowing that.' This was the message I was to give you."

The full significance of the meeting began to dawn on Ellen now, and she threw her arms round Lesbia's neck.

"Babette, dear Babette, how very good you are! but will your brother

and sister really let you stay with us, and be a daughter to mamma, while disgrace and danger hang over both the boys? Are you really come to take your place among us just now, when we are brought so low, when every one is against us?"

"Will you let me in? Do you love me enough? Do you think me good enough?" whispered Lesbia, clinging to her; and then the two girls embraced again, and shed a few tears together.

"How I wish mamma was awake, that I might take you to her at once," Ellen cried. "You will be better to her than sleep. I little thought that any light could come to us this dark day; but you have brought it, for I know now that Pelham is walking to prison this minute with a light heart. Lesbia, I will tell you something. He and I were sitting just here, talking about you, at the very moment that it happened, when the summons came for him to go."

"It was late last night, was it not?" questioned Lesbia, with a look in her eyes that implored—"Tell me everything, every word."

"It was late, and we were sitting nearly in the dark. There was a fire in the grate, at which I had broiled some eggs for Pelham's supper, and there was a faint light from the moon; but that was all the light we had. Mamma had gone to bed, and he and I had been sitting together talking for half an hour. He had returned from Galway only an hour before, and had been telling me of the disappointment his visit there had been to him, since the person who had appointed to meet him there never appeared. We think now that the appointment was a ruse of Darby O'Roone's to get Pelham out of the way while they were plotting against him, and to throw an air of mystery over Pelham's doings just now. The day had been a very anxious one to me, too, and Pelham brought news that increased my fears. He had heard in Galway that Connor's name was in the list of Dublin Club leaders, against whom arrests on charge of high

treason are out. While we talked sorrowfully of Connor I gave Pelham a foolish, affectionate message Connor had sent to him. I can't tell you when and how; but I told Pelham all, and he was very much touched. There was an allusion to you in this message, and, discussing that, Pelham branched off to speak of his love for you, and of the circumstances that forbade his ever letting you know it. I was listening and thinking, I had two brothers whose hearts I could be proud of, though they were so different one from the other, when there came a knock at the front door that I knew the meaning of in a moment. I was half frantic, and wanted to drag Pelham away to hide him somewhere, but he would not let me; he went to the door himself and brought in our untimely visitors. They proved to be, as I expected, the two police sergeants who had searched our house in the middle of the day—and with them was Darby O'Roone, who had come for his own pleasure, I think, to triumph over us in our trouble. They began to question Pelham about some letters and papers taken by one of the sergeants from a portfolio that happened to be on this table when I stupidly left him alone in this room on his first visit. O'Roone was loud and insolent—bent on entrapping Pelham into some admissions that would tell against him; but the Englishmen were civil enough at first, evidently only wanting information. They had heard of the rewards offered for Connor's arrest, and they hoped to get a clue to his whereabouts from Pelham or me, believing that he was somewhere in the neighbourhood then. Pelham could easily have satisfied them, and saved himself from any annoyance, if he had chosen. But, of course, he did not choose. He was very quiet and firm all the time, and made no other answer to their questions than that he could not explain how the papers came to be in his house, and when they told him that Darby O'Roone had brought a warrant to arrest him, and would produce it if he refused to give the infor-

mation required, he said he was ready to go with the officers of justice wherever they chose to take him. Oh, Lesbia, it was a terrible hour for me, for I had the clue the officers wanted, and I could have told them what would have cleared Pelham at once, and I did not know whether I ought to speak or be silent. I think I should have spoken if Pelham had not put out his hand in his quiet way and taken mine and held it all the time the discussion went on. Then when the voices grew loud mamma heard, and rushed in and clung to Pelham and implored him not to go—not to let himself be parted from her. It was very hard for him. He carried mamma back into her room and stayed there alone with her for a few minutes. I don't know what he said to her, but it satisfied her that he was right to go, and quieted her for the time. I was left here with the men, and the English sergeant came up to me while Pelham was away and put his hand on my shoulder, and said kindly he was sure that was a good son and brother who had just left the room, and would I let him be carried to prison if I could help it? It would not be a good place to be in while the insurrection they talked of was going on, and once in prison on charge of aiding the rebels, it would not be easy to get out till all was quiet again, and who could say to-night when that might be? Lesbia, do you think I was wrong to hold my hands over my lips to keep myself from speaking, and so let the minutes pass, that might have changed all?"

"You were obeying him," said Lesbia. "I don't think I could have done it; but I believe I should have known I ought to obey."

"It was not from obedience," Ellen said; "I thought of Connor. Pelham had told me a little time before that if he was arrested on that charge and convicted—and those very papers would have convicted him—he would be ——"

"Yes, I know, John said the same," cried Lesbia, shuddering; "but if the papers are so dangerous, and Pelham will never give up the author of them,

will not the whole of the danger come on him?"

"But Connor may escape from the country; and since Pelham is innocent he will stand a better chance on his trial than Connor could. I was able to think of all that, for the time seemed very long while Pelham was away in the inner room with mamma, and while the kind-looking sergeant stood by my chair pleading with me. Darby O'Roone grew impatient at last, and began to swear at the delay, and then Pelham came back and said he was ready to start. The wretch Darby reminded the policemen that they had brought handcuffs, and that they had before them a long, dark ride to Ballyowen, through a country where a very little effort on the part of Pelham's friends would make it easy for him to escape; but the English sergeant gave Darby a look of contempt that ought to have made him wither up into the reptile he is at heart, and said he would trust the gentleman, and then he went with Pelham himself to the stable to saddle Pelham's horse. I hastily packed up a few necessities in a travelling bag and ran outside and gave it to him just as he was riding away. He told me to take care of myself, and of mamma, and to trust for help to Mr. Thornley, and then he began to say something about you, but O'Roone came up and cut short our farewell. I watched them to the turn of the road. The policemen had lanterns, and I could see them moving on and on to the very end. I almost forgot (I am so used to watching Pelham to that point), that it would do mamma no good to know he was safe so far on such a journey as this one. Poor mamma! Pelham's words had acted like a spell on her, compelling her to be quiet; he has such influence over her; but I don't think she realised that he was really going away till I came

back alone. I felt very powerless to comfort her. It was a terrible night, much like in painfulness to another I have to look back upon in my life. I felt very wicked while it lasted, as if God had deserted us and let every one be against us; but better thoughts came with the light, and now you have come bringing the love that shames me for my hard thoughts, and ought to teach me never to lose faith again. Did your brother know you were coming to us?"

"Know? why of course he did. He has gone to Ballyowen to remonstrate with the magistrates, and you may be sure, Ellen, he will never rest till he has done all that is possible. He said he might have to go to Dublin to get permission to communicate with Pelham and secure his being fairly treated."

"This will surely comfort mamma. I hear her stirring now. Go in to her, Lesbia. She shall see your bright face when she opens her eyes and hear your good news before desponding thoughts have time to come back."

"And while I talk to her, had you not better prepare everything for leaving this house as soon as she is dressed? The thought of being on the way to him will best help her to bear up, I know. John said I was to bring you both back to Castle Daly for the night, and tomorrow she and I will go on to Galway, and when we come back——"

"You think you shall bring him with you?"

"I will never go back to Castle Daly unless he is free to go there too if he likes. Ellen, it is not my house any more. I don't feel as if I had anything now but the one thing—that is everything to me. I am going to tell your mother that she is to come tonight to her own house. You will feel that it is hers, and yours, and his—not mine—won't you? or I shall never believe you love me."

To be continued.

THE PRESENT ASPECT OF THE IRISH LAND QUESTION.

It is not the least remarkable phenomenon of contemporary British history, that Ireland, in most things many years behind Great Britain in the race of civilization and progress, should act as pioneer in three important matters of legislation, viz., the severance of the Church from the State, the establishment of a national system of (nominally) unsectarian education, and the legal enactment of tenant-right. Irish Conservatives account very glibly for all this by saying that unprincipled Radical statesmen use Ireland as a *corpus vile* on which to try dangerous experiments in tampering with our glorious constitution—an explanation having simplicity for its only merit. The truth more probably is, that the backwardness of Ireland has made immediate legislation on these subjects both more necessary and more simple and easy there than in Great Britain, whose very progress has complicated these questions. In Ireland there was no widespread provision for popular education. The state was called upon to supply it without delay. Practically no vested interests or existing institutions stood in the way, and hence, together with the urgent necessity for the introduction of some state system, occurred the opportunity of introducing the system most in harmony with the spirit of the age. The more advanced civilization of England has supplied a considerable apparatus for popular education, and this, while it lessened and postponed the necessity for state intervention, rendered such intervention more difficult when the necessity arrived. The case of the Disestablishment of the Church offers many points of analogy, but is complicated by so many other considerations, that I shall not attempt to follow it here, but will proceed at once to the third matter, the land question.

Ireland had not advanced sufficiently
No. 187.—VOL. XXXII.

to evolve for herself a good working arrangement for the cultivation of the soil out of the contradictory elements of Irish customs of tenure and English laws of landed property. The state of things presented in 1870 was one of bad management and attempts at practical injustice on the part of many landlords, and disaffection and bad husbandry on the part of most tenants. The problem was one which required immediate solution, and the solution (apart from English prejudices) was not a hard one. We had a country of peasant farmers. We had to bring these peasant farmers, as far as we could, under the conditions in which alone peasant farming can be successful, and under which it has proved itself capable of being the best possible system of farming. This was done by helping farmers to become proprietors where it was practicable, and, where it was not, by conferring on their tenure such of the beneficial attributes of proprietorship as circumstances allowed. When I say that this would have been an easy task but for English prejudices, I am not taking away from the merits of the Irish Land Act, for English prejudices, together with Anglo-Irish and full-blooded Irish prejudices, made it a very difficult measure to manage, and Mr. Gladstone has done nothing more worthy of his fame than the framing and passing of it. The English land question is only dawning, because England in her progress has got over the great difficulty of reconciling the claims of small holders and great landlords, by evolving a class of large holders who are more or less able to take care of their own claims. The English land question will, however, soon become a burning one, and the chief sign that it will, I take to be, not so much the moderate though growing demands of our present race of farmers for some sort of legalized

tenant-right, or the exertions of the Land Tenure Reform League and its allies, as the Agricultural Labourers' union movement. If this movement goes on, as there seems to me every reason to believe that it will, large farming will cease to be a remunerative business. The only farmers who will be able to make a profit will be those whose holdings are small enough for their own labour and that of the members of their families to form a large proportion of the total required. On the other hand, *petite culture* will not flourish without greater security of tenure than either the present law, the Duke of Richmond's "primer," or the measures approved by the English Chambers of Agriculture provide for. It will be necessary not only for the well-being of the small farmers themselves, but also in the interest of the consumer and of the commonwealth, to give them greater incentives to the highest cultivation of the soil. The present condition of agriculture in England, however, which is so much better than its late condition in Ireland as to make the need for legislation much less urgent, will increase the difficulty of this legislation when the need arises, and the false start, which, I think, has in some measure been made in England in the development of the large farm system, must involve some risk of the passing of provisional measures that in the end may make further reforms more difficult. If the future of English agriculture is likely to be that which I have indicated, there cannot be a better preparation for the formation of a public opinion calculated to promote a satisfactory settlement of the land question that is looming in England, than careful observation of the progress of the same question in that island which has, as it were, been brought up from the rear to act as pioneer to the United Kingdom in these matters of the Church, the school, and the land; and therefore some observations on the present state of the Irish land question may perhaps be acceptable even to those whom Irish matters, as such, do not interest.

Any one approaching this question

from without will probably be a good deal puzzled. He will find, on the one hand, that the *Times* and its correspondent, the Irish conservative papers, and sundry other authorities, maintain that the question is finally settled, and must on no account be reopened—that the Land Act went much further than Parliament in its soberer moments would have approved in making concessions to Irish tenant farmers and interfering with the rights of property; that, however, these concessions having been irrevocably made, we must console ourselves with the consideration that the cantankerous Irish tenant has got greater privileges than he had any right or reason to expect, and cannot possibly ask for anything more; that if he does, it can only be taken as a proof of the folly of all concessions to Irish popular demands. On the other hand, he will learn from popular speakers and writers and members of Parliament that the Land Act was a delusion and a mockery—that the Irish farmer has got none of his rights yet—that he is as much exposed to capricious eviction, legal spoliation, and rack-renting as ever, nay, a great deal more so, that the country is being drained of its life blood—by what an eccentric candidate last election called in his address an "emigration of despair"—in consequence of the defenceless and down-trodden condition in which British law leaves the Irish farmer. The inquirer may receive a ray of light upon the nature of these latter views when he finds them coupled with such assertions as that perpetuity of tenure at something under present rents is the only remedy for Ireland's wrongs and the inalienable birthright of the tenant farmer (see the speeches of J. Biggar, Esq., M.P., and others), and when he finds them propounded at meetings held for the establishment of "Home Rule Associations" in hitherto loyal neighbourhoods. If, however, this gleam lights him back to belief in the views of the *Times*' correspondent, the *Express*, &c., it will be but an *ignis fatuus*, and he will not be much nearer the truth. A very respectable body of

opinion exists, especially in the North, which demands a considerable amendment of the Land Act without countenancing the extravagances of the Home Rulers, and which is represented by several newspapers in Ulster, but perhaps most ably by the *Northern Whig*, which regularly devotes two columns in its weekly issue to the discussion of the land question from this point of view.¹ Under the auspices of this moderate party several tenant-right conferences have been held, one at Belfast about a year ago, and one at Dublin last January. These conferences (particularly the latter) have been discredited by the foolish utterances of some of the speakers, including some members of Parliament, who may be supposed to have spoken as they did with a view to pleasing "national" constituencies more foolish than themselves; but the good sense of the majority of the delegates from the farmers' clubs served to keep all extravagance out of the resolutions passed, of which the following are the chief:—

"That every day's experience deepens our conviction that the Land Act of 1870 is insufficient to remedy the admitted evils of the system of Irish land tenure, and that no measure can be just or satisfactory to the people of Ireland which does not give to all tenants in Ireland security of tenure, protection against capricious or arbitrary eviction; and also against arbitrary increase of rents; the acknowledgment of the tenant's property in the value created by his improvements; and the free and unrestricted right of sale of his interest in his holding.

"That, believing that these advantages were secured to the tenants holding under the tenant-right custom of the province of Ulster, where that custom is observed in its integrity, we will cheerfully support any measure that will enforce that ancient custom, coupled with provisions that will extend practically to all tenants in Ireland the full and

entire enjoyment of the advantages which that custom in its integrity assures."²

As far as regards the region round Belfast, and the greater part—perhaps the whole—of the counties of Down, Antrim, and Londonderry, I believe that these resolutions are not otherwise than reasonable; that nothing more is here asked for than the legalisation and extension of customs already prevailing on the most prosperous estates in those districts. When, however, it is proposed, as it is, in a Bill that has been prepared to be brought before the House this Session, to extend these customs to

² The Ulster Tenant Right Custom spoken of in this paragraph is practically the same thing as the measure described in the paragraph above it. . . . It gives the tenant security of tenure, or exemption from arbitrary eviction—that is to say, a tenant (though nominally from year to year), his heirs and assigns, are never put out of their holding as long as the rent is paid, and the land not sublet or subdivided, or some very atrocious misdemeanour committed. It also protects the tenant to a great extent against arbitrary increase of rent. Where the custom exists in what is here called "its integrity," which it does in a portion of Ulster comprising the greater part of the counties of Down, Antrim, and Londonderry, the tenant also has the right of selling the permanent interest which the custom gives him in his holding, to any solvent purchaser; the landlord being bound to accept the purchaser as tenant, or pay the outgoer the full amount of the purchase-money, which—owing to the rents being moderate, and the demand for land excessive—is always altogether out of proportion to the value of the unexhausted improvement, and has been known to exceed the value of the fee simple. In other parts of Ulster, the custom, while forbidding arbitrary eviction and unreasonable increase of rent, allows the landlord to forbid the sale at his pleasure; but here, if he wishes to take up the farm himself, he must pay the out-going tenant compensation to somewhere about the amount that he might reasonably expect to realize if allowed to sell. This is the custom which was kept inviolate in many large districts in Ulster, though till 1870 it was upheld by no sanction whatever, in law or equity. What is commonly called "the tenant-right" of a farm is the tenant's saleable interest in his holding, comprising, besides unexhausted improvements, which is often a small item, the right or privilege of continuous occupancy, and in many cases also exemption from increase of rent, the value of the whole being enormously raised by the great competition for land.

¹ The *Northern Whig* is said to have been lately sold to the proprietor of the *Irish Times*, a "trimmer" paper. The transfer has not however yet had any apparent effect on the views propounded in the *Whig*.

the whole of the rest of Ireland, to many districts where there is at present no trace of them, as well as to others where they only exist in a modified form, it is incumbent on us to inquire more strictly into the intrinsic merits of the various features of these customs, the general legalisation of which is demanded. It is a superstition that Anglo-Irish philanthropists are only beginning to shake off, that, because English farming was better than Irish, the right thing to do for Ireland was to introduce the English system of farming and large farms. The superstition is of the same character, though not quite so far from the truth, which induces the Irish tenant-right party to think that, because farming round Belfast is on the whole better than elsewhere in Ireland, every feature of the customs there prevailing would with great advantage be enforced all over Ireland. In discussing the merits of the various demands made under the head of Ulster tenant-right, I must beg leave to start from the principle on which the *Times* not long ago made a violent attack, but which has been upheld by such economists among us as Mill, Fawcett, Cairnes, Thornton, Leslie, and others, as well as by the most eminent authorities on rural and political economy on the Continent, and which is indicated, if not positively laid down by the great Adam Smith himself: That the peasant proprietor is the best, as well as the happiest cultivator, because (1) security of continued possession, and (2) the assurance that he will himself reap all the fruit of every improvement he makes, are the greatest possible encouragements a man can have to good husbandry. Peasant proprietorship has other advantages, such as the exemption from any payments of rent, rendering surplus profits available for improvements, but as these cannot possibly be given to the tenant-farmer, I will confine myself to the two above-mentioned most important features of peasant proprietorship, the features which it has in common with the tenant-right asked for in the first three demands of the resolution of the tenant-right conference above

quoted: exemption from arbitrary eviction; exemption from arbitrary increase of rent, and acknowledgment of the tenant's property in the value created by his improvements. All these encouragements to good farming, and promoters of contentment, the Land Act of 1870 attempts to give, but gives inadequately. The compensation for disturbance which is provided to secure the first exemption is said not to be sufficient to deter a landlord from eviction in many cases. It has even been said that it makes it easier, as now he knows approximately what he will have to pay for evicting, while before, the consequences being unknown, he dared not evict at all. In any case the demand for land is so keen, that whatever the landlord has to pay to the evicted tenant, he can obtain from some aspirant for land as the price of the goodwill. My own observations lead me to think that the deficiencies of the Land Act in this respect are considerably exaggerated; but as it is the *feeling* of insecurity even more than insecurity itself that discourages improvement, some amendment in this direction is probably desirable. The simplest and most popular expedient is fixity or perpetuity of tenure, *i.e.*, a law that no tenant farmer may be deprived of his holding for any cause whatever, except non-payment of rent. This, it appears to me would be an unnecessarily and undesirably strong measure. The way in which our farmers talked, even before the Land Act, and in districts where only a very modified form of tenant-right was the custom, of *their own land*, and the way in which farms held nominally at will were left in testaments, and given as marriage portions, and so forth, convinces me that a measure short of fixity would give the farmer all the security needed without depriving the landlord of his right of eviction, which he would seldom use, but might occasionally use with great advantage to his tenants and neighbours. Landlords may on the whole be an incubus and a drawback to a country, but as long as they exist we may as well make such use of them as we can, and

the expulsion of utterly objectionable tenants, from either an agricultural or social point of view, would perhaps be a useful function, which the limited right of eviction would enable them to perform occasionally. This demand would probably be profitably complied with to the extent of making the damages payable for arbitrary eviction heavier, but allowing the court to take the conduct of the evicted tenant as a farmer and a member of society into consideration in the amount awarded. Under such a law every tenant might feel the utmost security of tenure as long as he was not guilty of any flagrantly criminal act, and did not make his holding a nursery for weeds, or in any other way become an undoubted nuisance to the neighbourhood in the opinion of an impartial tribunal.

The increase of rent is a matter more difficult to manage, but, perhaps, of even more moment. The provisions of the Land Act are certainly inadequate. If the increase is arbitrary or unreasonable the tenant's only remedy is first to refuse to pay the rent, then to allow himself to be ejected, and then to plead the exorbitance of the rent as a "disturbance," and claim compensation. The fear of having to go through so unpleasant a course of procedure may prove as fatal a discouragement to improvements that would tempt a landlord to raise the rent unduly as the certainty of having to pay the raised rent. There is no doubt that many men would submit to pay a rent not altogether beyond their means, but which was, nevertheless, in part of the nature of interest on their own investments in permanent improvements, rather than leave their homes, even with ample compensation in their pockets. This provision of the Land Act does not remove the chief drawback to tenant-farming in a country like Ireland, where all improvements are generally made by the tenant—namely, that the land is not the farmer's safest bank, that he may have to divide with his landlord the interest of his investments in his farm, while he will be insured the whole interest on his savings if he invests them

in any other safe venture. The most popular remedy for this evil is, that rents should be settled by a periodical valuation. The principles on which such a valuation should be founded appear to be so little understood at present, and the difficulty of distinguishing that part of the increased value of every farm in Ireland which arises from tenants' improvements from that part which arises from general causes seems to be so great that I doubt the present expediency of this plan, and think that landlords and tenants should rather be encouraged to refer disputes as to increase of rent to arbitration, or to appoint a valuator approved by both parties, as has lately been done on Lord Powerscourt's Tyrone property; but that failing such an arrangement, the tenant should have a direct appeal to the land courts against the imposition of an unreasonable rent. A provision of this kind is embodied in the New Land Act Amendment Bill. Professor Cairnes, in his valuable essay on "Political Economy and Land," has suggested that the highest rent recoverable by law in any case in respect of purely agricultural holdings should be a valued rent equal to what he calls the economic rent.¹ Such a provision would

¹ For the benefit of those who are not posted up in the political economy of the land question, I quote the following passage from the above-mentioned essay by Professor Cairnes:—"The phenomenon of agricultural rent . . . consists of the existence in the returns to agricultural industry of a value over and above what is sufficient to replace the capital employed in agriculture with the profit customary in the country. This surplus value arises in this way. The qualities of different soils being different, and the capital applied even to an area of uniform fertility not being all equally productive—farms differing besides in respect of their situation, proximity to market, and other circumstances—it happens that agricultural produce is raised at varying costs; but it is evident that when brought to common markets it will, quality for quality, command the same price. Hence arises, or rather hence would arise in the absence of rent, a vast difference in the profits upon agricultural industry. The produce raised on the best soils, or under other circumstances of exceptional advantage, will bear a much larger proportion to the outlay than that raised under less favourable circumstances; but as it is clear that, in a community

in great measure prevent any farm being injured by paying a higher rent than it could afford. It would also tend to prevent subletting when that pernicious practice is not otherwise provided against. It would further serve to hinder a landlord from repaying himself the penalty incurred by arbitrary eviction by reletting the holding at an exorbitant rent.

Omitting the third demand mentioned in the resolution—which is practically included in the second and fourth, and with regard to the rightness of which there can be no question—we pass to the claim made to the unrestricted right of free sale by the tenant. Without tracing Ulster tenant-right back to the conditions of the plantation of Ulster, or comparing it with knights' fees, as has recently been done, we can easily see how the right of free sale would survive or grow up, as the case may be, together with the other features of the tenant-right custom. On estates where rents were very seldom and very moderately raised, where the tenants who paid them were never disturbed, where farms were allowed to pass by will and by inheritance, it was natural that they should also be allowed to pass by sale; and wherever a property was managed either very liberally or very carelessly, the rule that a tenant might sell his interest to any solvent man, would soon become established. Probably, as I have already said, it would not be well to reverse this rule where it has become the acknowledged practice. Over great part of Ireland, and even of Ulster, however, landlords have retained the power of choosing a new tenant when an old

tenant gives up his holding, even in those districts where custom has prohibited the landlord from evicting a tenant or refusing to accept his legitimate successor in his place at his death, and the question at issue is whether it is expedient to deprive the landlord of this power. It is evidently for the interest of the landlord, of the land, and therefore of the community, that a farmer who fails from any cause, should be encouraged to hand his farm over to an enterprising and solvent man, instead of being tempted to struggle on, getting behind with his rent, and letting his land go to the bad; and he cannot be better encouraged to do so than by a law or custom which enables him at any time to realize the full value of his interest by selling it in an open market. This is the sum of the general argument in favour of extending and legalising the right of free sale, which the Bill I have mentioned would do for all Ireland, and a shorter Bill introduced early in the Session by four Ulster members, would do for all Ulster. To the farmers such a measure is recommended by the fact that if any one of them at any time wants to dispose of his interest in his holding, he will get a larger price for it in an open market than in a market controlled by a landlord's right of veto or choice. It seems, however, too much forgotten that the treatment of the land will depend upon the person who may have to buy as well as upon the person who may wish to sell, and that the same excessive competition for land which enables landlords to extort exorbitant rents will also enable out-going tenants to extort exorbitant prices for tenant-right, and that the economic effect of the latter—though it differs much in degree—does not differ in kind from that of the former; that if it be desirable to limit the landlord's power of charging an excessive rent it must also be desirable to limit the tenant's power of charging an excessive price for tenant-right. The advocates of the "Ulster-custom in its integrity," say, "If you acknowledge that the tenant has an estate or a valuable interest in his hold-

where people engage in agriculture with a view to profit, even this latter portion would need to carry such a price as would give the producer the same profits which he might obtain in other occupations (for otherwise he would not engage in its production), it follows that all the produce except this, sold as it is, quality for quality, at the same price, must yield a profit over and above the customary profit of the country. This surplus profit is known to political economists as 'rent,' and we may henceforth conveniently distinguish it from the rent actually paid by the cultivators as 'economic rent.'

ing, how can you reasonably deny him the right of selling it in the open market." To this argument there are obviously several answers, but one will serve—"as reasonably as you can interfere with the landlord's right to evict or to raise the rent beyond what is fair." In both cases expediency is the rule, and good husbandry the object. Where the land is owned by occupiers, it would be clearly out of the question to limit by law the prices paid for it, and the various advantages of proprietorship would on the whole counterbalance the evils arising from the payment of competition prices for farms. Moreover, in such a state of things the evil would correct itself sooner than it would be likely to do under the more complicated system of tenant-right. Buyers would sooner learn justly to estimate the value of what they bought. This is clearly shown by the fact that Irish farmers will often give proportionally much higher prices for the tenant-right of a farm for which they are to pay rent—even when they cannot be certain that the rent will not be raised—than they will for the fee-simple. Tenancy, even with tenant-right, is not ownership. It has not the economic advantages of ownership, and should therefore be given the benefit of any special advantages of which its nature makes it susceptible. Of these there are two. First, the choice of a new tenant may be placed in the hands of a person whose interest it is that he should be a good cultivator and a desirable member of society. The outgoing tenant obviously has no immediate interest of this nature. The landlord has. Secondly, the price may be limited to a reasonable amount that will not cripple the incoming tenant's means of farming in order to start the out-goer in a new career with a larger sum than the amount of his labour and investments fairly entitle him to. This could not be accomplished by direct legislation, as, of course, some means would be devised, where competition was keen, of paying over-regulation prices. But if the landlord retain the right of pre-emption, not at the highest

competition price, but at the fair market value estimated by valuers, by arbitration, by land courts, or by any other impartial tribunal, in case the landlord or agent cannot agree with the tenant as to the amount, every prudent landlord would be impelled by his own interest to see that his land was not occupied by tenants impoverished by the payment of competition prices for tenant-right. It has been objected that under this rule needy or grasping landlords would pocket the difference, buying out tenants at the lower price and taking the competition price from in-comers. This might be provided against by a similar limitation to that which has been proposed as to the amount of rent legally recoverable for a purely agricultural holding. The amount legally recoverable by a landlord from an incoming tenant might be limited to the fair market value of the holding, to the amount paid to the out-goer together with arrears of rent due, and any costs out of pocket, either of law or repairs, or to the economic value of the tenant right. Over-regulation prices might sometimes be obtained, but to bargain for them would imply risks that few landlords would care to run. The reservation of the landlord's right to buy up tenant-right at a reasonable price would in great measure meet the objection that has been made to the legislation of the Ulster custom by Lord Lifford and others, that it prevents landlords from consolidating clusters of miserable farms of one or two acres a-piece that are to be found on many estates in Donegal and elsewhere. It would not enable them to make a clean sweep of these farms, and it is not desirable, on the whole, that it should; but it will enable them to throw them together as opportunities offer, and they will offer, and slow reforms generally work better in the long run than quick.

I have above used the phrase *economic tenant-right*, and before leaving the subject must briefly explain what I mean by it. Tenant-right has been described by economists as the value of the difference between the rent to be paid and

the highest rent obtainable for the holding. By economic tenant-right I mean the value of the difference between the rent to be paid and the economic rent of the holding as it stands, or, in other words, the mercantile value of the tenant-right when the highest rent obtainable is the economic rent. This will be approximately the value of the fee-simple, or of the land rent free, minus the value of the rent to be paid. Economic tenant-right differs from customary tenant-right in several ways. First, owing to excessive competition for land in Ireland, the highest rent obtainable is much above the economic rent, and the higher the obtainable rent the higher of course the tenant-right. Again, tenant-right is not only paid for exemption from rack-rent, but also for security of tenure, and therefore often amounts to a large sum even when the rent to be paid is a rack-rent or the highest obtainable rent, when the economic value of the tenant-right is *nil*. If, however, security of tenure and immunity from rack-rent be conferred on the tenant as his legal right, he should no longer pay for these privileges, and the price of tenant-right, in the absence of excessive and ruinous competition, should be reduced to its economic value. If the rent payable be the fair rent, the adjustment of which we have discussed above, the economic tenant-right, which we have defined as being the value of the difference between this rent and the full economic rent, must arise from value put into the land by the tenant; in other words, be equal to the value of the tenant's improvements. Our rather involved investigation, then, appears to have led us to the somewhat trite conclusion that an out-going tenant should be paid the value of his unexhausted improvements. My apology for taking the reader by this crooked road to this apparently easily attainable goal is, that it is the only road that leads to it by way of Irish tenant-right, and also that the valuation of improvements on small farms is often so difficult that it would generally be easier to make a fair award

as to the sum the out-goer was entitled to receive by appraising the market value of the tenant-right than by attempting to go into the improvements in detail.

Tenant-right advocates are often heard expressing themselves very strongly against "estate rules," or "office rules," and we cannot be surprised at this when we learn that these rules not seldom take the senseless form of laying down a fixed sum per acre, as the amount of tenant-right to be allowed to any tenant leaving the estate, regardless of the condition of the land, or of the proportion which the rent bears to the value; or the still more foolish form of fixing the tenant-right, acknowledged on an estate, at so many years' rent, with the absurd result that the higher the rent is, the higher the tenant-right; and that the slovenly farmer, who neglects or deteriorates the land may receive as much as the most improving tenant. I should not have thought it worth while to refer to this phase of the question, had not Judge Longfield, in the Cobden Club Essays, most unaccountably advocated a provision resembling the last-mentioned arrangement.

I have now briefly gone over the chief points of the Irish land question which still require settlement—which call for a Land Act Amendment Bill. That the question should be so complicated as to demand an elaborate amendment of so carefully and ably drawn a measure as the Irish Land Act is a misfortune inseparable from the general divorce of the occupation from the ownership of land. As long as this divorce continues general, no laws can render the conditions of land tenure thoroughly satisfactory, although, as I have pointed out, some incidental advantages may be obtained under the divorce that are wanting in the union. To the union, however, we must ultimately look as the solution of all land questions, and this union will, I believe, come about gradually, and without the help of heroic measures. When the remnants of our feudal institutions have disappeared, when land can no longer be

ties up, when it can be easily and cheaply transferred, when the possession of large extents of it no longer carries with it power and place ;— when our upper classes learn to recreate themselves by other means than the pursuit and slaughter of wild and tame animals, landlords will probably be glad to sell their land to occupiers. Land will then be worth more to an occupier than it can be to a landlord, and the transfer of the ownership will be for the advantage of both classes. Resident country gentlemen will, no doubt, retain a certain amount of land beyond the limits of their own parks and home farms,

and let it to large or small farmers, and such an arrangement may do good rather than harm ; but the vast districts owned by non-resident landlords, or lying far away from their dwellings, will in time, I doubt not, come into the possession of occupying farmers, to the benefit of all the interests concerned. In Ireland, however, many years of tenant-right must precede this change, during which the tenants must lay by money for future purchases. And I cannot but think that the land question is destined to pass through some analogous phase in Great Britain.

HUGH DE F. MONTGOMERY.

ETON THIRTY YEARS SINCE.

At a period when all of us are rightly anxious—and, as it seems to me, some people are distinctly mad—on the subject of the education of the masses, it may be not uninteresting to recall the system of training pursued at the first and most aristocratic of English schools just one generation ago.

Eton was at that time, to the best of my recollection, made up of some six hundred boys. To begin with the beginning, there was the Lower School, composed of the first, second, third, lower Greek and upper Greek forms, besides two other forms, styled respectively Sense and Nonsense—I presume from the character of the Latin verses which were set in each respectively. But all these Lower School forms may be described as mere skeleton regiments, or what the French call *cadres*, the whole number of boys under the control of the lower master and his three assistants averaging some twenty or thereabouts—while twelve masters only were allotted to the remaining five hundred and eighty boys. This Lower School was a splendid example of what has since been termed "Survival," and an excellent illustration of Eton Conservatism. There really had been a time when boys had come up in numbers, of such tender years and so scantily furnished as to fill these forms, and to constitute a large part of the school. That time had vanished; yet the institution still remained. It was a kind of unknown world to the rest of the school, with separate hours for work, and under a separate code of laws, and whether, in the absence of pupils, the masters taught each other, was a subject of speculation among the upper boys. Nor did any one exactly know whether, if a lad on first entering had the misfortune to get placed in the Lower School, there were any sure means for him to get out

again, except by great increase of size, which would make the masters ashamed of him. Most boys, however, had come up sufficiently prepared to avoid falling into this gulf, and were placed in the fourth form, the lowest of the Upper School divisions. A limited number were put at once into the "Remove," the division between the fourth and fifth forms. And it was an inflexible rule that no new-comer could be placed higher than this, let his attainments be what they might. These two forms, the remove and the fourth, comprised nine-tenths of the lower boys, and about three-eighths of the whole school.

I do not think that much could be said against the course of instruction we had to pass through during this part of our training. An average boy would have about two years of it. Every half-year the form to which he belonged moved bodily a step upwards in the school. That is to say, the middle fourth of Christmas became the upper fourth of the following July, and passed into the remove at the succeeding Christmas, making its way by the force, so to speak, of its own impulse into the fifth form at the next Christmas after that. There were two examinations to be confronted, one on the threshold of the remove, and the other on that of the fifth form, in accordance with which the names were placed according to merit, and a few (generally some half-a-dozen) unusually idle or thick-headed boys, lost their promotion. But the bulk sailed easily and peacefully into that haven of repose, the fifth form. And at this point were exhibited, in my humble opinion, some of the greatest anomalies and absurdities of the then existing Etonian system.

The practice was this. As soon as a boy had once got into the fifth form—merely shaving through, it might be, in the examination—he was safe from any

further ordeal of the kind to the close of his Eton days, and moved up by seniority to be Captain of the Oppidans, or even of the school, which he must necessarily and infallibly become, provided he had been sent to Eton early enough to obtain a good start, and remained long enough to outlive those above him.¹ The sixth form was composed of the ten senior Collegers and ten senior Oppidans, and included some of the very worst scholars of both orders in its bosom. And this was of a piece with what might be observed all through the school owing to the "remove" system. A boy's place on the general roll was no more a criterion of his acquirements and industry than would be the "year" of a young man at Oxford or Cambridge. His place in his division was indeed a test of his acquirements at the time when the place was fixed, and to go into the fifth as "Captain of one's remove" was equivalent to a small Senior Wranglership. But, as we have seen, this would be the result of an examination occurring at a comparatively early period of the boy's Eton career, and no subsequent test was applied. The consequences of this sort of irremovability were just what might have been expected in the case of those boys who required some sort of stimulus to call forth their energies, that is to say, in the case of at least two-thirds of them.

Of the six so-called working days of the week, one was always a holiday, and one a half holiday. In addition to this, every saint's day was a holiday, and every eve of a saint's day a half-holiday. Two whole holidays in a week (I have known three) and two half-holidays were consequently of common occurrence: and if to these be added "play after four" on summer afternoons, we shall be making a very fair allowance if we put down the working days of the week as upon an average three.

¹ With regard to the collegers, *i.e.*, the seventy boys on the foundation, a change took place during my school-days, and I believe that they had some sort of examination at a later period, in accordance with which their seniority on the list for King's was fixed.

These three school-days of a fifth form boy—and the hours and the work were the same all through the numerous divisions of the form—would be spent pretty much as follows:—The whole time spent in school throughout the day was from one hour and three quarters to two hours and a half as the maximum. First a few minutes between eight and nine, when we had to say in turn to a master, and were at liberty to walk out when we had repeated the dozen lines or so called for. Then from about ten minutes past eleven till a quarter to twelve: from ten minutes past three to a quarter to four, and finally from ten minutes past five to six: these three last lessons for construing. I have some recollection, moreover, of Friday being a great "saying day," when a boy who stood pretty high up in his division, and judged his turn well, might get off with about fifteen minutes' schooling in the twenty-four hours. In order, however, to acquire an idea of the sort of work done on these whole school-days, it will be worth while to examine them somewhat more closely.

The hour from eight to nine witnessed, as I have said, the commencement of our labours. We had to stand up in turn and repeat some portion of thirty lines of the *Iliad*, or of the *Æneid*, or some ode of Horace, the construing lesson of the day before. The boys at the head of the division would have to be out of bed the earliest, in order to be in school at eight, when their turn came; but they would be out of school again in a few minutes. Those at the bottom of the division would have half-an-hour longer to devote to their slumbers, and would not be obliged to present themselves till half-past eight, at which time the præpostor's list closed; but, on the other hand, they would have nearly half-an-hour to spend in school waiting for their turn. *Auwea mediocritas!* those who like myself were usually in the middle of a division had in this, as in almost everything else, the advantage. We rose at eight, got into school at twenty-five minutes past—it would not do to run it too fine—and were out

again in ten minutes at the latest. When you had been "up" to a master for a few weeks, you could judge with the greatest nicety the period when your turn would come.

The subject-matter of this repetition was, as I have said, the lesson of the day before. Every boy had had this lesson construed to him once at his tutor's, and once, or more commonly twice, in school, not to speak of any superfluous preparation which he might have devoted to it in the first instance himself. It resulted from this, and from the subject being in verse, which greatly facilitated his task, that a boy of average capacity came into school next morning already quite prepared to stand the test of saying off some few lines to the master, who was generally liberal in his promptings. Indeed, from the system adopted, a boy, when he had been any length of time in the fifth form, had been so often over the same books that he was spared any trouble at all upon the subject. The results of these constant repetitions have remained with many of us to this very day; and I could, with very little preparation, repeat large portions of the *Æneid*, and nearly the whole of the *Odes* of Horace. Now this may be a very desirable result; but what I am saying just at the present moment is that the eight o'clock lesson was not very hard work.

The next lesson took place nominally at eleven, really at from ten minutes to a quarter past eleven (when an assemblage of the masters, called "Chambers," had broken up), and lasted without intermission till a quarter to twelve. The inevitable thirty lines of Homer, or Virgil, or "*Poetæ Græci*," formed the subject of this and the two afternoon lessons, which exactly resembled it. Each division contained at that time about sixty boys, and any boy was liable to be called up to construe; but the best construers were naturally the most frequently called upon, and the turn of a medium performer did not come on an average more often than three or four times in a half-year. After translating some dozen lines he was told to sit down, or in case of

egregious failure visited with a punishment which usually took the form of having "to write out and translate his lesson." But this could only happen in the case of a very careless or a very stupid boy: the school arrangements providing a machinery by which all but the least attentive and the least gifted could pick up their lessons beforehand with scarce a particle of trouble. This was the private construing in the private tutor's pupil-room, which took place immediately before each school lesson, and lasted about a quarter-of-an-hour. At this were assembled all the sixth and fifth form of the various divisions who happened to be under the private tuition of the same master, and among these were pretty sure to be found a sixth form Colleger, or one or two good scholars in the upper division. These—of course in this place I can only speak as to my own tutor—were almost invariably set to translate the lesson, which they did with the greatest ease, generally recognizing in it an old friend; and we, the juniors, had only to follow them over the hard words and difficult passages to become tolerably up to our work. This process was so very successful that though many of us had English translations, or "cribs" as they were called, we very seldom needed to use them.

The books used in the fifth form—besides the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, Horace, and I think some scraps of Ovid for repetition merely—consisted of three "*Selections*" or "*Readers*:" "*Poetæ Græci*," which contained some picked passages from Homer's *Odyssey*, Callimachus, Theocritus, &c., together with "*Scriptores Græci*" and "*Scriptores Romani*," which were similarly made up of tit-bits from the best Greek and Latin prose-writers. A lad would go on grinding at the above scanty provender from the age it might be of twelve to that of twenty, with little or no change. Plautus, Terence, Lucretius, Persius, Juvenal, Livy, Tacitus, Cicero, Demosthenes, the tragedians (except in the Head Master's division), Aristophanes, Pindar, Herodotus, Thucydides, in short, all but four of the great authors

of Greece and Rome, and those four poets, were entirely unknown to us, except it might be through the medium of certain fragments in the "Selections" aforesaid, where I believe that the majority of them were wholly unrepresented. It seems almost incredible that a young man could go up to the university from the upper fifth form of the first classical school in England ignorant almost of the very names of these authors. Yet such was the case sometimes. It was very much my own case.

I must not omit the composition of themes and Latin verses in alternate weeks, a certain number of lines varying according to the successive divisions of the form; sixteen, eighteen, or twenty being the minimum. I remember that we acquired at last such a mischievous facility at this kind of work that we used to knock off our exercises at breakfast and tea, and the clever boys wrote them by way of amusement for the stupid ones.

There remained the Head Master's division after the fifth. This, as I have said before, comprised a by no means picked lot, but (at any rate as far as the Oppidans were concerned) the last survivors and representatives of otherwise extinct removes, who had worked their way by seniority from the bottom of the fifth form, just as naval officers when once "posted" mellow insensibly into admirals. I do not know by experience what were the books read in this division, but I believe that, with the exception of a little Greek play, they were identical with those in use in the divisions below; the boys belonging to it certainly attended most of our private construings.

The reply to all this, and to a great deal more that might be told of a like kind, will be that under the old system good scholars were produced. It must be admitted that a good many youths, the early part of whose education had been received at Eton, and who subsequently spent three years and a half at college, took good degrees there. It must be admitted also that many scholarships and prizes for poems were carried off by Eton men. But the wonder

would have been if this had been otherwise. And the proportion of these was not, I venture to say, anything like what might have been expected from the numbers of the school. Moreover, if the matter be looked into a little more closely, it will be found that at least three-fourths of these distinctions (at any rate at Cambridge) were carried off by King's men, *i.e.*, by those who at Eton had been among the seventy Collegers or gown-boys, sons of poor parents, who as a general rule did work, and who were greatly looked down upon by the rest of the boys for their poverty and their industry.¹ But after all the reply does not meet the case above disclosed. A boy with an aptitude for classics will become a scholar in spite of all disadvantages. The proper test of the system would be what it did for average boys who are naturally idle when not compelled to work, and I am quite sure that for these it did but little.

No wonder that when the institutions of the place breathed a spirit of gentlemanly idleness, the boys caught the prevailing tone and exaggerated it. A curious answer of Lord Morley (then Lord Boringdon) is recorded in the Report of the Public Schools Commission. He was asked whether a boy would be looked down upon at Eton for being industrious in school-work. His answer was, "Not if he could do something else well." That is to say, prowess on the river, or at cricket, or football might be pleaded as an excuse for scholarship. Where this excuse was wanting, public feeling would be dead against the offender. Lord Morley's answer exactly expresses what was in my time, and what seems to have been at a much later time, what perhaps is now, the spirit of the school.

The Upper-School masters, with each

¹ King's men could not compete for the Classical Tripos till 1853, since which time they have done wonders. What they have done in the matter of distinctions—such as the Craven Scholarship and the Browne medals—always open to them may be seen by referring to the Cambridge Calendar.

of them a houseful of seven-and-twenty boys to look after at home, and a division of sixty or so to look after in school, were sadly overtaken, and could not possibly suffice for the duties properly attaching to their position. There were some extremely good men among them, and there were (what there need not have been) some extremely bad ones. This latter result was brought about by an adherence to an old and absurd tradition, which had nothing in the world to recommend it except that it *was* a tradition; and that was everything in the eyes of the Eton authorities. It was held that Eton masters must have been Eton Collegers, and the almost universal rule was to select them from an extremely limited field, the single college of King's at Cambridge. Hence it happened more than once that a vacancy occurring, and no good man being eligible for the post, an indifferent one had to be taken. This inefficiency of some of the masters was no secret to the boys, who are, indeed, usually the first to discover this quality, or rather absence of quality, in their teachers. There were houses, consequently, which were a complete Paradise for lazy boys—oh, how the rest of us wished that our parents had only sent us there!—and divisions in which it was a well-understood thing that nothing need be learnt or was to be learnt, except to be sure to go on being “a gentleman:” a lesson which was taught us all through the school, and perhaps the most important of all lessons. Only, some of us middle-aged folk would like to have had a little more Latin, Greek, and Mathematics taught us at the same time.

The mention of Mathematics reminds me that they were almost unknown at Eton on my first arrival there, five-and-thirty years ago, and at the date of my departure figured only on the list of extras in company with dancing, fencing, and other elegant accomplishments to be learnt and paid for separately at the option of the boys' parents. I remember, as a lower boy, going a few times to one Mr. Hexter, a gentleman of about eighty years, and who was very

much respected from the circumstance of his being a magistrate, and if I remember rightly a Deputy-Lieutenant, for the county of Bucks; it is possible that he may have seen what are called better days. In company with this venerable man a few of us—I should think some twenty—worked out sums of arithmetic on slates whenever we chose to visit him, which was not often. On our entrance into the Fifth Form we were addressed to Mr. Stephen Hawtrej, the late admirable mathematical master, who in those days held a small class in a room at the top of a dame's house, remotely situated on the confines of the playing-fields, which room he rented for the purpose. In the course of a short time, Mr. Hawtrej, to whom Eton owes a deep debt of gratitude, built a “Mathematical School” with a dome on the top of it, and thus along with a local habitation, gave a certain name and dignity to the study, which rapidly increased in favour. But it was still optional only, and, what was worse, optional to a great extent with the boys as well as their parents. The extra-masters either did not possess the machinery for enforcing attendance, or, as seems more probable, hesitated to exercise it. And all this in face of the rule then prevalent at Cambridge that no one could compete for classical honours without first obtaining mathematical ones.

I cannot close this paper without adverting to two extremely singular institutions, much cherished by the authorities of my day as accessories to their system, and which indeed seem to me admirably to illustrate that system. One was the theory of “bounds,” and the other the practice of public flogging. In neither case, if I were endeavouring to explain the matter to an educated Frenchman, should I feel quite sure that he believed me to be speaking the truth.

To begin with flogging. It was, in my time, so far from being a punishment administered on special occasions only, or with any degree of solemnity, that some half-dozen to a dozen boys were flogged every day. It was entirely pub-

lic; any one who chose might drop in. I have sometimes been one of three spectators, and sometimes one of a hundred. These latter large assemblages were collected, of course, only on occasions of very great interest, either as to quantity or quality—a member of the eight, or the eleven, to be “swished,” as they used to term it, or a number of culprits to catch it for doing something or other particularly heinous—smoking or drinking, or going to Ascot on the sly. The crowd on these occasions (always swollen by the culprits’ particular friends and associates, who came to see how they “stood it”) would throng the staircase leading up to the head-master’s room, flattening their noses against the balustrades and the oaken door, struggling and elbowing for places, vociferating, chaffing, fighting, in the intervals of peeling oranges and cracking nuts, just for all the world as it is said that mobs used to go on outside Newgate. Then, sometimes after an interval of a quarter of an hour, the door would be thrown open from within, and spectators and victims, in one confused mass, poured into the execution chamber.

Any one who had been borne in along with them might have chanced to witness, as I more than once did, a scene which could scarcely have had its parallel in any civilized country. Not that I am one of those persons with a kind of humanitarian softening of the brain who cry out for the total abolition of corporal punishment in our schools. Certain imps of ten or twelve may be uncontrollable by other means. But that a young man of eighteen, nineteen, or even it might be of twenty years, should be made to kneel down after the fashion of a little boy, *nudis natibus*, and on that portion of the frame which I have taken the liberty of clothing (it must be thought of as having no other clothing) in a dead language, should receive successive strokes from a huge birch rod, before a large concourse of spectators—all this constitutes a picture which would have presented itself to any one but the Eton authorities as a caricature, and what is worse, an inde-

cent caricature. I remember sometimes thinking as a boy, after witnessing one of these spectacles, how ashamed of himself the head master must feel, even though the person he had been striking was one of his own size.

It will be thought that the head master’s division being exempt from corporal punishment, such an event as the birching of a youth of eighteen or nineteen could rarely, if ever, take place. No doubt it was not common, for this, among other reasons, that there were not a great many young men over eighteen in the whole school. Yet it did sometimes occur, and was to be publicly witnessed, and this is all that I have stated. Indeed, it stands to reason that this must have been so, when the line which carried exemption was drawn after the first thirty or so boys in the school, and was not based on any considerations of age. Now in the upper, or even the middle division of the fifth form, there were often youths quite as old as any of the first thirty, within a month or two it might be of proceeding to the university or going into the army, and if any of these committed an offence held by the school code to be without benefit of clergy, to the block he was sent. I remember having been myself operated upon in the company of two friends, both of them in their nineteenth year, and who were by no means high up in the school; one of them staid on a year longer, and may have been birched when hard on twenty. There was no reason whatever to be drawn from the school regulations why he should not have been.

I wish that this indecent birching of big, burly, bearded men, in frock coats and cutaways, could be spoken of as one of the obsolete practices of a quarter of a century ago. But, from two cases which have recently come to my knowledge, I should fear that it has been continued to a much more recent period. My informant was himself a fellow of King’s, an Eton tutor, and it is almost unnecessary to say, a great admirer and conservator of all ancient usages. Yet he admitted that the stories which he

told me were nothing short of "disgusting." One was about a young man of twenty, just upon the point of leaving the school, and engaged to be married to a young lady at Windsor. When visiting his intended on a certain evening, it seems that he protracted his stay beyond the time at which he was bound to be back at his tutor's house, the hour of "lock-up" as it is styled at Eton, his father-in-law that was to be undertaking to explain matters to the authorities next morning. But the explanation was destined to come too late; the next morning, during eight o'clock lesson, the unfortunate lover was sent for by Dr. Goodford, and by the said Dr. Goodford well and soundly whipped, after the usual form of proceeding in such cases made and provided, and very likely—my informant did not add this, but it may very well have been so—between two little boys of twelve punished for not saying their lessons. What, however, my informant *did* add was that, within a few months of receiving this manual castigation, the young man was married. Who, before this, would have thought of including in the list of perils to which lovers are subject that of the birch rod!

The other case was that of a young man of the same age.¹ He was the very tallest youth in the school, about six feet three or four, I should suppose, with bushy, black whiskers. The commission of some school offence had brought him under the special notice of Dr. Balston, the very last head master: and the contrast presented by this giant, as he looked down upon his comparatively puny assailant, while in the act of making some fundamental changes in his garments, was described by an eyewitness as a thing not easily to be for-

gotten. The worst of it was that, leaving soon after, he found news of his recent castigation had travelled into his own neighbourhood, where it formed the subject of some agreeable banter at the meets of the hounds (behind and among which he was a great performer), especially on the part of the young ladies. One can fancy them whispering and tittering at his approach, and then laughing outright and blushing scarlet as he came up. Now, whatever offence the young man may have committed, I think it could hardly have been of a kind to render him the subject of such an acute punishment as this implies. And if he had knocked the head master down, and thereupon walked off to the railway station and taken a ticket, and so made his way home, I am sure that if I had been that young man's father, I should have been inclined, if not to condone, at any rate to make some allowance for, the act.

The institution of "bounds" was perhaps as curious and inexplicable as any part of the school system. By the term bounds is generally understood what must exist in every well-organized seminary for boys, namely, the limits beyond which, except on particular occasions or by special permission, they are not permitted to go. The line as established at Eton was drawn very close round the college and the masters' and dames' houses; and, beyond the ground on which these stood, embraced little more than the playing fields. The town or village, whichever it is, of Eton, with its shops where we got our cricket-bats and foot-balls—not to speak of clothes, hats, boots, as was the case with many boys—the tailor's, where we invariably kept our boating-jackets, stopping there to put them on and take them off on our way to and from the river, all this was "out of bounds." By this it was not meant that it was an offence to go into the town or the surrounding country, or even to cross the Thames into Windsor; but that if a boy happened to catch sight of a master anywhere out of bounds, he was under the obligation of

¹ Youths high up in the boats, the eleven, &c., were often so enamoured of the school that they induced their parents to leave them there as long as possible. I knew one captain of the boats who was suspected to be over twenty-one. In the end his tutor sent him away expressly on the ground of his being "too old." This passion for Eton is not to be wondered at. The life of a "big fellow" there is the happiest in the world.

scampering off as hard as he could, just as if he had really been detected, or were afraid of being detected, in the commission of an offence, and were trying to get away. Not to do this, not to "shirk," as it was called, was floggable. The logical character of this arrangement was exhibited every day in some such instance as this. You were peacefully sauntering along, bearing an order from your tutor for a book or a hat or a coat, when, on catching sight of the self-same tutor walking through the town, or coming upon him at a corner, you were bound to rush with all speed into the first hiding-place that presented itself. As this hiding-place was generally a shop, it might happen that the official whom you were shirking came in after you on business of his own; but in these cases the majority of the masters held that you had got into a kind of "base," and were safe. Indeed, except by hiding under the counter, which was not always practicable, it would have been impossible to carry the simulated flight further. Accordingly, at Ingaltan the bookseller's, it was not unusual to see a master or two surrounded by half a score of boys, every one of whom must have run for his life if he had met the same masters outside the door of the shop. I have heard explanations of this strange practice attempted, but none that have appeared to me in the smallest degree intelligible. It has been said that the authorities did not recognize a right on the part of the boys to go out of bounds, but must be understood as merely conceding to them a temporary permission to do so, reserving to themselves the power of putting an end to the arrangement at any time; and that the shirking system was kept up as evidence of this power: in the same way as the Duke of Bedford closes on certain days the gates across some of the streets of Bloomsbury. Just as if there could be any right or any power in the matter except that which emanated from the authorities themselves, who could fix the bounds at their pleasure. And, even if one can treat such an argument

as serious, surely the reserved power might have been kept on foot by making the boys shirk, as the Duke of Bedford closes his gates, one day in every year.

There were other singularities connected with the Eton system of a generation ago. But enough has been said to suggest the question whether the school of that date was indeed a school in the serious sense of the term, or merely a kind of *crèche*, or asylum for children of larger growth, to which the wealthy intrusted their young ones for the purpose of being kept out of harm's way, with the understanding that they were to be returned gentlemen at all points—riding, shooting, and other extras of the kind being, of course, taught at home. If this was virtually the view which so recently prevailed in upper circles, we shall be taught some indulgence for the apathy in the matter of making the most of educational advantages which still unhappily prevails in the lower. As regards Eton itself, it is of course possible that everything has been changed. The authorities may have consented to break with some of the fond traditions which they inherited from the times of Henry VI. and Queen Elizabeth. Some sort of stimulus may be applied to the boys by whom it is most needed and at the time when it is most needed. "Sap," or student, may have died out as a term of reproach, and the Newcastle scholar may be a greater personage than the captain of the boats. The king's scholars, or poorer students, who win almost all of these Newcastle scholarships, may now be looked upon, as they deserve to be looked upon, with the greatest consideration and respect. "Bounds" and the flogging of bearded men may be unknown. If this be so—and I hope all this is so—it will not be without a strange curiosity, and perhaps even incredulity, that the present generation will see here briefly recalled the main features of the system of training in force in the first of our English schools, at a period so incredibly recent as thirty years ago.

JOHN DELAWARE LEWIS.

E

A SEQUENCE OF ANALOGIES.

I

AUTUMN is drear,
 The trees they are sere,
 And she that is dear
 Is far far away;
 I wander in night
 For lack of her sight,
 For she is my light
 And she is my day.

The year it is dying,
 The leaves are all lying
 Where sad winds go sighing
 Through forest and grove;
 My heart it is failing
 Through hope unavailing,
 Through weeping and wailing
 For her that I love.

Rest! Rest and peace!
 Death is our release,
 Our haven where cease
 All the ills of our clay.
 When spirits are freed
 From this earthly weed,
 They will live above
 With those they love
 In a glorious summer time, ever and aye

II.

The flower of purest whiteness,
 That blooms in a lonely dell,
 Wastes not its heavenly brightness,
 Though none of its beauty may tell.
 A spirit its life has tended,
 And guarded its home with love,
 And when its time is ended
 Shall bear it to bloom above.

The songs that the skylark singeth
When no one is nigh to hear
Are not lost as she heavenwards wingeth,
Though heard by no mortal ear.
The Spirit of Music has stayed them
As they fled on the wings of the breeze,
And among her best treasures has laid them
With stream-songs and sighs of the trees.

E'en so the love that unailing
Yet finds no response on earth,
Shall not die all unavailing
Though no one may learn its worth.
The Angels themselves shall claim it
When its trial-time here is past,
And Heaven, where nought shall shame it,
Shall answer its hope at last.

III.

Brightest dreams may be forgotten
And fade from out the heart,
Love by earthly thoughts engendered
Soon faints when lovers part.
Dearest hopes may be despaired of,
And beauty lose her art:
These are earthborn, and must fade
In Lethe with the bliss they made.

Hopes that are in Heaven sealed
There shall perish never,
Love that springs from souls' divineness
Floweth on for ever.
Purer spirits knit by loving
Nought on earth shall sever,
Till together as they roam
They reach their everlasting home.

IV.

Beings drawn to one another
Join by Nature's law at last.
Lovers earnest to each other
Meet before all hope is past.
Somehow in time fitting
Before their souls are flitting
Or elsewhere—who can tell?
Soon after the passing bell.

A Sequence of Analogies.

Nought is lost which has existence,
 Even a careless thought of wrong ;
 Though its work be in the distance
 Fruit will come, for laws are strong.
 Glorious thoughts seem wasted,
 Longed-for joys untasted.—
 'Tis *not* so. Time goes on :
 Eternity's not done.

'Tis not that which seems most cheerful
 To our feebly groping minds :
 Often 'tis a lot more tearful
 Which the skein of fate unwinds :
 Often 'tis a kindness
 We see not through our blindness.
 So are we wroth at pain
 And notice not our gain.

Love is far too great a wonder.
 Is it pain or is it joy ?
 Lovers moan when they're asunder ;
 Are their sweets without alloy ?
 Yet 'twill bloom in season :
 Want of trust is treason :
 Somehow in time fitting
 Before our souls are fitting,
 Or after—who can tell
 What is beyond that passing bell ?

v.

When May is blooming fair, love,
 And sweet birds all are singing ;
 When May is blooming fair, love,
 And buds are all outspringing,
 We'll seek some quiet bank of thyme
 Where lights and shadows play,
 And think upon our love's first prime
 Till falling of the day.

When summer suns are bright, dear,
 And fields with gold are glowing ;
 When summer suns are bright, dear,
 And gay flowers are a-blowing,
 We'll rest beside some merry stream
 In a deep bowery wood,
 And muse upon the tender dream
 That fills our souls with good.

When silent winter sleepeth,
And hoar frost sparkles brightly ;
When the year dying weepeth,
And snows lie gleaming white'y,
We'll say, "'Tis time to pass away,
For death in love is sweet ;
It is but birth to brighter day
Which we should gladly greet—
To find beyond that opening door
Our love unchanged for evermore."

VI.

The light of evening fadeth fast,
The sun's bright ray no longer glows ;
The daily toil of earth is past,
And weary hearts may seek repose :
May no sound mar their sleep
Who only thus may cease to weep

E'en so with kindly hand may death,
When age's twilight falleth round us,
Our eyelids close, and still our breath,
And with the veil of sleep surround us,
Until the dawn shall come
And wake us in a painless home.

C. H. H P.

"ENGLAND AND RUSSIA IN THE EAST."

If the tone of our leading daily journal, when recently reviewing the most important of all published expositions of the Central Asian difficulty, be accepted as an index to the sentiments of the Government or country, then indeed may we save ourselves the trouble and expense of a foreign policy at all beyond the limits of Europe and America. Sir Henry Rawlinson has clearly and concisely described the political situation, so far as it concerns ourselves, in Persia, in Afghanistan, in the once Independent Khanates, and in Yarkand and Kashgar. He has sketched with a masterly hand, and with the power given only to those who are thoroughly acquainted with their subject, the story of our early relations with the Shah, the rise and progress of British influence at the Persian Court, the objects and advantages of an active alliance and a renewed support in the same quarter, the inevitable results if we leave Persia to her own devices. He has given us a *résumé* of our dealings with Afghanistan; and, in freely speaking his opinion of the Afghans, has supplied us not only with the ideas of a thoughtful reading man and a sound Oriental scholar and politician, but the results of personal experience. He has described and discussed the countries and inhabitants of the Central Asian region, between the Caspian and the desert of Gobi, with artistic ability and literary skill, combined with a scientific appreciation well becoming the President of the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain. And the con-

clusion at which he has arrived, after a practical and careful analysis of our position and obligations, is, that if the Russians extend their encroachments or annexations to Marv, an oasis commanding the roads to Khiva and Bokhara, to Mashhad, the capital of Khurasan, and Herat, the capital of Western Afghanistan, and situated at a comparatively easy distance from these places, England should advance an army from British India and occupy Herat. Such a volume and such a proposal, however pacific and utilitarian may be the dominant sentiment of the day, should not be met with indifference, or otherwise than with respectful consideration.

It is not enough, in treating so serious a subject, and one so vital to the maintenance of our prestige, to say that the contiguity to British India of a vast and powerful empire is rather cause of rejoicing than of dismay, because it joins civilization to civilization, and promises an accession of strength and active sympathy in the suppression of barbarism. Let us thoroughly sift the pleadings on both sides before we condemn the whole policy of our predecessors; and if we find that an inborn aversion to anything Indian, or an idle fear to look Eastern questions in the face, are at all obstructing the road to a just decision, let us manfully struggle to shake off the baneful influence. If Indians are to be tabooed because they have an Indian "point of view," which is neither acceptable nor easy of comprehension out of their own professional sphere, there is no need that the tabooing process be applied to all mention of the distasteful theme. Ostracism of the individual would be a minor evil to the inhibition of legitimate debate on matters of national moment. The umbrella of a barbarian king, or the club of a savage, command sufficient attention to be treasured in a museum,

¹ England and Russia in the East: a Series of Papers on the Political and Geographical Condition of Central Asia. By Major-General Sir Henry Rawlinson, K.C.B., F.R.S., &c., &c. John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1875.

The Times, 5th April; and other Press notices of the above work, in March and April, 1875.

without regard to the social failings of the original possessors.

In another quarter objection has been found to the volume under reference, in that the Russian policy is misapprehended, the power of Russian generals is overrated, and the personal observation essential to check statistical errors in some cases is wanting. But granting these objections proven (which we are by no means inclined unreservedly to do), there remains such a mass of truthful record, of pertinent evidence, to the great importance of the case propounded, and of strong common sense in the arguments used, that we see no cause to modify the favourable judgment on the merits of the book arrived at on a first perusal; and we readily enter the ranks of those who congratulate the distinguished author on the successful manner in which he has fulfilled his intention of producing a "Manual for Students of the Eastern Question." The republication of three exhaustive contributions to first-class literary periodicals appears especially judicious, both as harmonizing with the rest of the papers, and as showing how little the observant writer's views have been changed by the course of events in after years.

There are but six chapters in all, and of these the two first are devoted to Persia. They explain the policy that has been pursued towards that ill-governed and ill-developed country throughout the present century by British and British Indian diplomatists, commencing with Lord Wellesley's action as Governor-General in 1798, when we were content to negotiate through a native agent at Bushahr; passing through a period of direct antagonism or shrewd fencing with European envoys; and ending with the Shah's return to Tehran from his Western travels in 1873. If the fact that the earlier portion of this essay was written in Turkish-Arabia—the writer being at the time in the midst of those Oriental associations which, at least in one form, had contributed much to his wide-world repute—be

held to weaken the political value of the testimony given in support of certain views; it must not, on the other hand, be forgotten that the second and later portion illustrates a state of mind arrived at after years of English town and country life, under influences quite as occidental, and a civilisation as refined, as would suit the Pelhams and Lothairs of modern fiction. The main drift of his argument is, that we should acknowledge, in our Persian ally, something more than a grotesque figure to which the eye and imagination have become accustomed by prints, poems, and pantomimes: that we should look seriously at Persia in her relative position to British-India, in her credit and character as a Muhammedan state, in her assumed vitality and possible regeneration; and that we should not rashly abjure or stultify former diplomatic efforts and results by an unnecessary inaction which, while gratifying a rival Power, does a real injury to our own prestige. In proof that the views expressed are not one-sided, and that defects and drawbacks are not ignored, the following passage may be quoted:—

"There can be no doubt that the country is at present in a most depressed condition, probably in a more depressed condition than she has ever before reached at any period of history. A series of natural misfortunes have combined with a long course of misgovernment to produce the most intense and wide-spread destitution. The silk of Ghilan, which was formerly the staple production of the kingdom, has entirely failed of late years, owing to disease among the silkworms, and although there is now a slight improvement in the crops, the export does not reach a fifth part of its former amount. Scarcity and drought, again, for several years consecutively, culminating in the famine of 1872, have depopulated large districts, converted flourishing villages into a wilderness, and spread the seeds of misery and pestilence broad-cast through the land. In the mean time the circulating medium has so diminished as to check all industrial efforts, and for the moment to annihilate trade. A bankrupt treasury, an unpaid army, corrupt officials, indecisive councils, and a timid executive, these and other chronic evils increase in intensity from day to day, and seem to fore-shadow a condition, not merely of political decrepitude, but of what may be almost termed a national atrophy. And yet, notwithstanding this appalling picture, Persia

has assuredly a career before her either for good or for ill. Her geographical position, forming a connecting link between Europe and India, makes her a political necessity of the future, her importance in the eastern scale of nations becoming yearly greater as the powers around her undergo changes of accretion or disintegration. With Turkey crumbling into ruin on one side; with Russia pushing on, not so much perhaps for a steadfast political purpose as under the impulse of irresponsible military ambition; with England stimulating the native mind of India to unnatural activity by an artificial system of education which may well create anxiety; with movement, portentous movement on every side, it is impossible that Persia can remain quiescent. It should be clearly understood that Russia has neither the will nor the power to subjugate Persia. Although the country is very sparsely populated, not containing more than six or seven millions of inhabitants, yet are the Persians so indissolubly bound together by their peculiar heresy, so strongly protected are they by nature, by impregnable mountains, and impassable deserts, that no European power could hold them in permanent subjection, except at a cost altogether incommensurate with the result. Russia could neither spare garrisons for the scores of towns scattered round the central desert, and each, if necessity arose, the focus of insurrection, nor could she penetrate the great chain stretching from Sulimanieh to Kermán, where each separate mountain group would be another Caucasus."—(P. 132.)

Chapters iii. and iv., reprints of remarkable articles in the *Quarterly*, show step by step the wonderful strides made by Russia in her great field of present encroachment, both after the Gortschakoff manifesto of 1864, and before the issue of that, now, not very intelligible circular. All excuse of ignorance on the score of geographical obscurity is rendered untenable by the vivid picture of the scene accompanying the mere narrative of operations, and the further addition to the letterpress of a carefully-executed map. So that the reader, whether casual or full of special purpose, may derive ample coaching from these particular pages without recourse to Vambéry, or the still more recent Russian and German authorities on Central Asia.

Truly the British public is in a fair way of becoming learned in Central Asian geography. To those who follow Russian advances and Russian explorations, as reported in the daily papers,

many new names will have become familiar since the visit of Count Schouvaloff introduced us to the villages and neighbourhood of the Oxus. And now that the Khiva campaign is over, and the bustle of organised invasion has subsided into the comparative repose of keeping the peace among Turkmans and nomad tribes, we have only to shut our eyes to suspicious movements along the Atrak valley, to change the scene of interest from west to east of Khokand and Bukhára. Not that there was lack of stirring incident in Zangaria, even while Khiva, with Marv and the Oxus, were on the *tapis*; but the lesson had to be learned gradually, and the northern boundaries of Afghanistan and Persia, with the politics and geography of the Khanates above the Caspian, were a sufficient study for the nonce, without introducing so important an element as China.

Independently of a faithful discharge of its duties to science, the Royal Geographical Society is rendering, unconsciously as it were, a high service to the State by opening out questions such as these. The secret of the popularity attained by this society must not be attributed to the solitary circumstance that its proceedings are not overburdened with technicalities, and that they are therefore intelligible to the mass, inclusive of ladies. There is nothing vague in its objects; and its discussions are necessarily practical and improving. No Barataria, peopled by imaginary shapes, but substance and reality alone are represented. The map and the diagrams are guarantees that the lecturer is dealing with facts; and these maps and diagrams are just as useful to the politician as to the geographical student. A Foreign Office clerk might learn more of the reality of Central Asia by one or two *séances* in Burlington House (and let us, in justice add, the Royal United Service Institution, as regards Russian military movements), than in poring over hundreds of volumes, the maps in which, if any, would most probably be faulty or obsolete, or needing oral explanation.

He would at least know better what the "right bank of the Amu Daria," annexed by the Kaufmann treaty to Russia, means; and what was the "former Bokharo-Khivan frontier:" while the Issik Kul, or prominent patch marking the long since obliterated line of ephemeral demarcation, could hardly fail to revert to his mind's eye with little or no effort.

But we must not stray from the President to the society over which he so ably presides. The fifth chapter of his book is perhaps the one of most interest to the politician who, however astute and intelligent, is but one of the *οἱ πολλοί*, obtains his knowledge with the multitude, and can only exercise his criticism from before the curtain. In it we are treated to a kind of revelation from the official *arcana* of Government; to what, after Max Müller, would be called a "chip from a secret and political departmental workshop." It is a memorandum formally submitted six or seven years ago to the Secretary of State for India, and by him forwarded for consideration to the Viceroy in Council. The missive did not fail in its original object. It expressed in one important respect, the public opinion, and met the approval of the Calcutta authorities, for it advocated the necessity of a friendly interference in the affairs of Afghanistan to a greater extent than exercised in more recent years. It reviewed Russian progress in Central Asia; foreshadowed its probable results, and augured ill for British India from the near approach of the absorbing empire. There was no apprehension of direct invasion upon our territory; but there was great fear that the subject masses would be troubled by rumours of Russian conquest, if verification were found close at our own doors; and that latent dissatisfaction and revolt would acquire sufficient new vigour and confidence to reappear above the surface in a form of mischief and danger. It sounded a note of anxious warning, and the quarter whence the alarm proceeded was neither unknown nor of little consideration.

The final chapter continues the argument where abandoned by this last-named memorandum submitted to Government; reviews Lord Mayo's Afghan policy, the Afghan frontier negotiations with Russia, the Khiva expedition, and the later phases of the Central Asian question in respect of the threatened Perso-Turkman outpost of Marv, Eastern Turkestan, and our own position in Afghanistan. Then follows the great issue of the book—the recommendation of a definite line of action; the result, in fine, to which so much terse, clear, and well-expressed narrative and comment and such sound and practical inquiry have led the way. The Anglo-Indian will have no cause to cavil here at suggested inactivity; rather would objection lie on the side of excessive energy. We select an important passage bearing upon the more recent proceedings in the Turkman tracts north of the Persian frontier:—

"The history of the Khivan expedition affords an apt illustration of the normal course of Russian progress in the East. Up to the year 1869 there was no special grievance against Khiva. The Khan did not, it is true, encourage trade nor cultivate very close relations with Russia; but, on the other hand, he had carefully held aloof, whilst Kokand and Bokhara had been successively humbled and dismembered, and, indeed, had studiously avoided giving cause of offence to his powerful neighbour. When the first Russian detachment, accordingly, crossed the Caspian from Petrofsk to Krasnovodsk, in Nov. 1869, and established itself at the latter place, there was no question of punishing Khiva for past transgressions. The object of the expedition was stated 'to be entirely commercial, as it would open a shorter caravan route to Central Asia, and also give increased security to trade by restraining the predatory practices of the Turcomans;' and this explanation was repeated whenever questions were asked, either by Persia, who not unnaturally took alarm at the sudden appearance of a Russian force within an easy distance of the Khorassan frontier, or by England, who in a new base of operations on the east shore of the Caspian foresaw danger to Khiva immediately and to India more remotely.

Russian explanations are not always to be relied on, but there seems no reason to doubt that it really was, as stated, a paramount object with the Russian Government at this time to open a road into the interior of Asia; and we are, perhaps, therefore justified in

regarding the occupation of Krasnovodsk as intended to be the first step towards the realization of a policy which had recently been put forward by General Romanofski, and which pointed to the establishment of direct and assured lines of communication between the Caspian and the Aral as indispensable to the prosperity—almost to the retention—of the new province of Turkestan; the only difference indeed between the two programmes, as set forth by Romanofski and the Government, being that in the one the strategical value of such lines in connecting Turkestan with the Caucasus was mainly insisted on, and in the other the commercial value. But whatever may have been the proximate object of the Russian Government in 1869—whether they were conscious that in sending troops across the Caspian they were initiating the most important movement that had been yet made in a great scheme of Central Asiatic Empire, or whether they merely looked to the extension of trade and the better protection of their commercial interests,—one thing is certain, that the descent of Russian troops on the Turcoman coast was an arbitrary act of power which, according to the law of nations, admitted of no justification. In an international point of view, indeed, Russia had no more right to appropriate the eastern shores of the Caspian than she had to appropriate Ghilán and Mazenderán. The coast was independent territory, inhabited by tribes who owed no allegiance either to Russia or Persia, and were only partially under the sway of Khiva. These tribes had given Russia no provocation, nor had they solicited her protection. It was simply their misfortune to be encamped upon a line of country which was required for other purposes, and from which, accordingly, it was necessary to remove them.

Three main causes are commonly assigned for Russian territorial extension in Central Asia, the existence of which may be admitted under certain reservations; but the reservations have an importance which should not be overlooked. It is said, in the first place, that Russia spreads southward and eastward in the natural course of things. Her vastness and power are self-evident; her civilisation, in one sense comparative, is at least positive in the appliances of Asiatic warfare. The people with whom she is now brought in contact precisely suit her scheme of easy conquest. Reared to contests, normally internecine, they acknowledge something of welcome as of dread in the approach of a foreign despotism. Physi-

cal difficulties of invasion lie chiefly in respect of country, and these are overcome by practice and perseverance. Secondly, that the Russian soldier fights for his national religion as much as his imperial standard; that he is urged on by an inborn superstition rather than the fear of a visible superior authority. Thirdly, that commercial ambition stimulates the middle as well as the military classes to enlarge the area of their native dominion. Without stopping to make any minute investigation, we venture to record, for the second of these points, a reservation which results from personal observation and experience.

The Russian soldier in Central Asia does not effect his conquests by simple slaughter or personal deeds of daring. Prone as he is to acknowledge the warcry of religious fanaticism, and indiscriminately to aid in the extermination of infidels and pagans, he is only loosed, on particular occasions, to work such his will upon the Muhammedan opponents of his country. The real policy of Russia is to conciliate and utilise those whom she is daily gathering to herself in the once independent Khanates. She is not only tolerant to her Muslim subjects, but she can print and circulate their books of faith in her own government presses. As an instance of successful treatment of aliens may be cited the one or two thousand Persians resident at Astrakhan. Among their number are found men so imbued with Russian views and Russian ideas as to have become almost insensibly denationalised. If we do not in every case approve the means used, we cannot but admit the wisdom of attaining, by some means, such results. It is among the young officers of the army, rather than the common soldiers, that will be found the spirit of territorial extension and absorption. Samarkand and Tashkand are, in their estimations, but stepping-stones to cities and towns beyond; they know no geographical boundaries or political zones; they meet with no resting-place to satisfy their patriotism or compensate them

for exile. To these ardent youths—and we speak from acquaintance with an especially distinguished type—the uneducated serf is the model human instrument; the man who blindly obeys without inquiry is the only true soldier they would employ. But the reigning Emperor has wisely and humanely decreed otherwise; and the Imperial policy over-rides the wills of individual subordinates, however forcibly expressed.

Space will not admit of more extracts, or indeed of any minute review of a publication which is as forcible in historical fidelity as it is eloquent in concise persuasion, and one thoroughly appropriate to the season in which it has appeared. Had we to find flaws of detail they would be of a subordinate kind, and hostile criticism would hesitate to lay stress upon them when detected. We might venture to differ in opinion on the importance attached by the native public to the despatch of one or more regiments from India during the Crimean war (p. 87); on the irritation which would have been produced in the Shah's mind by the occupation of Karak (p. 93), when counter-irritants could so readily have been found; on the actual effect and anticipated results of the Makran and Sistan boundary settlements, (p. 116)—though the political valuation of the latter province appears strictly true, in the face of popular assertions to the contrary; on the impracticability of a proposal for declaring the independence of certain States (note, p. 302), which seems to have been capable of modification to wholesome practice: and we may miss a clearer explanation why England and Russia, being both bound "to respect the integrity of the Shah's dominions" (p. 328), should not have agreed upon the line of his northern frontier between the Caspian and the Oxus when giving boundaries to Bukhara and Afghanistan.

But Achilles has a heel in varied modern types as in Homeric descriptions. The vulnerable point is, to our mind, the conclusion at which the author arrives. The case for consideration may be expressed very briefly. Thirty-seven

years ago the state of affairs in Central Asia caused great disquiet in India and among Oriental politicians in England. The progress of Russia Eastward provoked alarm, debate and Government action. Much of what was feared in 1838 had come to pass in 1865, and yet the public mind was comparatively tranquil. The blow had fallen, but British prestige had not sensibly suffered. The reviewers and the club politicians kept alive discussion; but the subject had become more or less weary, flat, stale, and to most minds unprofitable. And so in after years, until 1875, if we except the excitement caused by the Schouvaloff mission and the subsequent invasion and part annexation of Khiva (which, after all, exploded in a burst of books, leading articles, lectures, pamphlets, and questions and answers in Parliament). Russia is now indirectly threatening a post which, if occupied by her troops, places Herat in her power. Herat is the key to India. Rather than let her possess it, shall we not throw forward a force beyond our present Sind frontier, and garrison the place?

The proposal to establish a fortified outwork at Kwatta, above the Bolan Pass, had been originated some years ago in India by the late General John Jacob, Political Superintendent and Commandant of the Upper Sind Frontier, and was revived more recently by one of that officer's most distinguished lieutenants, now Major-General Sir Henry Green. Sir Henry Rawlinson admits the military advantage of such a work (p. 291) in covering the frontier, and presenting a serious obstacle to an invading enemy. He sees in it, moreover, a means of inspiring our native subjects with fresh confidence in the vitality of their rulers, and consequently an accession of moral strength to which we cannot afford to be indifferent. This last view, if correct, at once removes a material objection likely to present itself to the over-Conservative Anglo-Indian on the score of unsettling the quiet of cantonments and bazaars. That it is correct we are not indisposed to credit; that it

is nearer the mark than the contrary view we are tolerably sure. But Sir Henry Rawlinson doubted, in 1868, the effect upon Sher Ali and the Afghans of planting a British garrison upon their own immediate frontier, and, closing his memorable memorandum of that year with this doubt, pressed consideration of the matter no further. We are strongly of opinion that, as a first move on the board—whether final or not would remain for later solution—this advance to Kwatta, with a clear knowledge of the politics about us, and an equally clear course of action provided for the guidance of our agents, looks feasible and politic compared to all other schemes of the kind. But whatever we do must be shown to be defensive and not aggressive, and action must carefully be guided by circumstance.

Action of some kind is expected from us, and action of some kind is due to our position if we are to maintain it in honour and integrity. The principle applies with equal force, whether we look to our Indian subjects and allies or outside the limits of our Indian empire. Russian aggression is the talk of the uneducated and educated classes in India; and though native opinion, as expressed in native journals, more especially those in the English language, could not be very clearly asserted or accounted for by the ordinary Mussulman and Hindu, a tendency to exaggerate every circumstance which affects the stability of existing authority pervades all orders and degrees of society. In Persia, Afghanistan, and Western Baluchistan, the three States with which we are most concerned, the British political barometer is watched with an eagerness not always complimentary to ourselves; and it may interest some to learn that when, in the cause of certain little-known but not unimportant or smooth negotiations in Makran, the news of the Black Sea concession to Russia of 1870 reached the respective camps, the fact reported became at once the favourite theme of the more civilized of the Asiatic delegates in conversation

with the British commissioner. Other obvious reasons for active policy will be evident to readers of "England and Russia in the East," if they be not advocates of political fatalism.

Occupation of Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat, suggested after long experience in command of Pesháwar,¹ is as much too "advanced" a project as that of retiring to the Indus is too retrograde. As regards the latter, if Russia were indeed our enemy as our rival in the East, we venture to say that nothing would suit her better than such a move. She would trumpet it far and wide to believing ears as a certain proof of our decadence, and Persia, taking up the cue, would renew her intrigues with, and encroachment upon, her Eastern neighbour. The advantages of a good geographical boundary would in this case be as nothing in comparison with the immense injury which would be inflicted on us in almost every other respect.

If the temper of the times be pacific, and may not admit of military movements, there can still be no need for positive inaction. The great and conscientious statesman who has been freely quoted as a rigid supporter of the *status quo*, showed by his latest acts in India that the policy of settledness was merely dependent on time and occasion. He would no more turn a deaf ear to change or progress where their uses were demonstrated, than he would have applied the rules of ordinary government to the emergency of the Mutiny. But there is a method of dealing with the present crisis without the employment of a single soldier; and in default of recourse to camps, we indulge the hope that attention may be bestowed upon it, as on a compromise far preferable to trusting to chance for the future.

Sir Henry Rawlinson alludes (p. 341) to the existence of a scheme of territorial settlement by which Russia was to declare her possessions between the

¹ The Central Asian Question. By Lieut.-General Sir Sydney Cotton, K.C.B.; quoted in Major Evan Bell's "The Oxus and the Indus," p. 56.

Caspian and the Aral to be bounded on the south by the old bed of the Oxus throughout its course, recognizing all the regions beyond as the Turkman Steppes. He had been assured that this project had been approved by the peace party in Russia, and only required moderate pressure from England to be adopted. In our estimation this scheme, or a modification of this scheme, might beneficially be rendered available in continuation of the Oxus or Northern Afghan boundary; and if negotiations on its behalf were successful, the sincerity of Russia would have been fairly proved, and a laudable object achieved. Rivalry would have to be put aside in so worthy a cause; mistrust and suspicion would have to give way in a union for the common good. Part of the programme would be the inclusion of Marv in Persian territory; and the strengthening of Persia, by England and Russia combined, would enable her to suppress Turkman raid and robbery. That she needs aid from England for this purpose, within her present limits, has been stated to the present writer within the last two years by a native member of his escort, when approaching Mash-had, the capital of Khurasan.

Though there can be no question that the proposals of Sir Henry Rawlinson demand the closest attention, and should not be cast aside until every word of his book has been read and understood, we can hardly suppose it possible that so strong a procedure as an advance upon Herat, the city of Afghanistan remotest from British territory, could be seriously contemplated by our Government under existing circumstances. Would the Amir Sher Ali, while demurring to the presence of a British agent at Kabul, concur in the passage of a British army through Kandahar to Herat? And would the passage of a British army to Herat be unsupported by the presence of a British agent at Kabul? And how about the intervening State of Kalát? Is the Khan well-affected towards us, or is he too much at the mercy of his turbulent *sirdars* and surroundings to exercise

free action in the matter at all? The dilemma in Baluchistan presents itself to our mind much in the following fashion:—If the chiefs are generally favourable to British rule, then must the Khan and his supporters be arrayed on the adverse side. If the Khan be our friend, then must we look for hostility from the more powerful chiefs. It may be said that Kalát is an insignificant state, and that the judicious use of money or the outward manifestation of strength will secure us a ready admission to its open plains or mountain strongholds at any time. But it must be remembered that a repetition of the scenes of 1839 would be greatly to be deprecated. Our soldiers then stormed the Khan's fort, and killed its owner. The act may or may not have been justified by circumstances. It was not, at all events, the immediate sequence of any continuous or intimate relations of friendship. We had but newly become acquainted with the chief or his country through our agents, and could not pretend to remedy its normal disquiet. Times have changed since those days. Kalát has been well-known to us for the last thirty years. We wisely reversed our policy of expediency, acknowledged the dynasty once opposed to us, in the person of a prince whose father we had slain; we received his political envoys, brought about personal interviews, and eventually appointed a British agent at his court. The present Khan, his brother, however disappointing a pupil, has been our *protégé*, and more or less under our tutelage, for eighteen years. We have subsidised, advised, and sought to strengthen him on his seat of power; our officers have laboured to help and instruct him in a healthy system of internal administration; and we have drawn a line of boundary to protect his frontier on the west. Although we may now, owing to individual shortcomings, admit the propriety of his deposition, it can hardly be agreeable to us to take the law of extreme severity into our own hands in his case, and risk the re-enactment of tragic measures, simply because it looks con-

venient to ourselves, and seems to suit our present purposes to do so.

As Sir Henry Rawlinson speaks of a probable "perversity" on the part of the Amir, which might occasion special difficulties, we need not enter into discussion on that head. We are concerned with, and our remarks apply to, the actual situation; to the facts already accomplished and results already communicated. We do not for an instant believe that the Government, the local political officers, or even the news-writers, if trustworthy, could affirm that our subsidies, our hospitalities, our despatches and declarations, have secured for us in Afghanistan all that can be desired; and that we are in a position to interchange envoys or agents in such manner as would become the honour and dignity of our British Indian Empire. This appears to be the main point, and to involve a mere matter of fact.

Again, in comparing the tracts between Sakar on the Indus and Herat, with those between Orenburg and Khiva, or the Caspian and Khiva, we must not make it a mere question of actual distance, or of carriage and supplies. The experience gained by Russia in her recent campaigns, when approaching Khiva from the north and west, is not that which would warrant her to make light of the Afghan and Baluch passes; nor, great as were the privations and admirable the patience and endurance of the Russian soldier, whether Verevkin's or Lamakine's, on their memorable combined march of invasion, do these qualities alone promise success in traversing mountains and valleys rather than steppes, dealing with nationalities rather than tribes, and encountering assailants in bands of less sparse and nomad character than the Kirgiz and Kazak. If the comparison be limited in its application to British troops alone, we still venture to think there is great discrepancy in the conditions and circumstances to be respectively taken into account.

One thing, however, is manifestly wanting to the solution of questions of this nature. There must be decision of

some kind. England should have a fixed Asiatic policy. In the course of events she has become mistress of a great empire in India, and the situation, with all its responsibilities, does not admit of indifferent statesmanship. There should be no divided counsels. An Indian viceroy and his council should be as truly the counsellors of her Majesty as are the Secretaries of State and their staff at Westminster. The interests of India should be as much the interests of Great Britain as the welfare of a child is the welfare of its parents, and *vice versa*. When a father sends a son to make his way in the world, it is as much the father's "point of view" as the son's that the latter should use all honourable means for distinction. When a mother brings her daughter out of the privacy of the family circle into the bustle of the outer world, the success of the *débutante* becomes essentially her own. In either case the one subject for argument is how to act for the common interest and honour. In public and official life, the way to achieve so desirable an end may be less palpable than apparent at first sight. There is perhaps no better course to pursue, to meet the present joint emergency, than the partial amalgamation of departmental forces on the "imperializing" principle which has more or less prevailed since the occurrence of the Indian mutinies. As there is a Secretary of State for India whose duty it is to dispose of Indian questions, whether political or otherwise, and a Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in whose province falls at times the nominal, at times the real consideration of Oriental questions, not actually Indian, but interesting mainly to India, a combination of *personnel* might be effected from the two offices to form an imperial "*Asiatic bureau*," under a responsible officer nominated by the Indian, but controlled by the Foreign Secretary. The selection of individual members might be made from the Turkish and Persian, as also the Chinese and Russian sections of existing departments in the Foreign Office, and those gentlemen in the secret and political department of the India Office

who had given their attention more especially to the class of subjects required. A proposal to this effect was mooted some eighteen months ago in an evening journal of repute,¹ with the very practical object of collecting all data bearing upon the politics or geography of Central Asia; and the experience of each passing day points to the necessity of introducing some such measure of administrative reform.

In addition, moreover, to the radical evil here but imperfectly indicated, there is, perhaps, a defect to be observed in the mode of training our Civil Service for that country. Current Asiatic politics, rendered intelligible by a sound knowledge of the history, geography, glossology and ethnology of the great Oriental Empire, for which England provides rulers and administrators, should be an essential part of the *curriculum* of study; and the exterior and interior policy of the country should form the subject of varied essays to test the thinking powers of pupils in the special departments for which their services might be required. That this kind of knowledge is not readily imparted under the cramming system, supplies a further proof of wisdom in the suggestion that passed competitors for the Indian Civil Service should be thrown together under one roof for a definite period, before setting forth upon an Indian career. It is not, however, merely to restore a deteriorating *esprit de corps*, and foster a healthful offi-

cial sympathy, that the said suggestion carries weight. This, of course, is much to be desired; but more good results remain. It *must* be a wise thing to let a year's digestion follow one or two years' cramming, and such process could not be better exemplified than in utilising the data gathered in various branches of science and study, in the nearest possible manner according to the practice pursued in India itself. Recent proceedings in courts and *kachahris* would be readily obtainable, and access might be allowed to the latest despatches of public importance on the prevalent topics of Calcutta, Simla, Madras, and Bombay, inclusive of bazar gossip: no man need then embark for the land of his professional career without initiating himself beforehand in its habits and customs, its language, literature, and politics. Russian progress in Central Asia should thus be as familiar to the young civilian as Orme, Mill, or even Todhunter.

The creation of a fixed Imperial Oriental policy would, it is predicted, be the natural consequence of the systematic study of these questions at home. The practical grounding of an Eastern diplomatist would change the unhonoured shadow he seeks to serve into a respectable reality; and although the operation of the reform here faintly indicated might deprive the world of so excellent a book as that of Sir Henry Rawlinson, the author would assuredly be among the first to hail the circumstances which rendered its protests and warnings superfluous.

F. J. G.

¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*: letter dated 17th August, 1873, headed, "Khiva Correspondents."

THE OPERA: ITS GROWTH AND ITS DECAY

THE opera, as we now have it, is just upon two centuries and a half old. It sprang from a mistaken attempt at resuscitating Greek music and the Greek drama. We know that all the speeches of Greek tragedy were chanted, and that the choruses were both sung and danced; also that the poet's part in every production for the Greek stage was at all times more prominent than the musician's, and that Greek poets made use of music only as a means to strengthen the expression of human emotion—much as Greek sculptors occasionally painted their statues to make them appear more strikingly life-like.

Now the music of the 14th, 15th, and 16th century was entirely unfit for any dramatic purpose. It was almost exclusively confined to the service of the Church. It consisted of a number of separate and independent vocal parts united together in such a manner as to produce polyphonous harmony of a very imposing and exalted character, but having no recognizable rhythmical phrases, no melody in our sense of the word, no leading tunes and subordinate parts. The kind of choral singing which this sort of music required, appears singularly appropriate to the social conditions and social habits of life in the middle ages, when the single and separate existence of men was in many respects merged in that of the multitude; when individual rights were scarcely yet recognized; when all men lived, felt, believed, and thought very much alike, and everything was governed and controlled by the feudal State and the all-embracing Church.

It struck some of the Italian literati of the later *renaissance* that if music was to be made use of for any dramatic purpose, a manner of singing would have to be found which would accord perfectly with the rhythmical rising and

falling, the peculiar inflections and closes of poetical speech. And the result of their endeavours—I mean the strongly accented *monody*, with its dramatic intensity and its charm, so irresistible that it extinguished the old style as suddenly as though a drop-curtain had been lowered—was as much in unison with the dawn of modern life as polyphony had been the mature expression of past feudalism.

In the houses of Count Bardi and Jacopo Corsi at Florence, towards the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries, we find enthusiastic scholars and amateurs of music, tired of fruitless theorising, engaged in practical efforts to resuscitate that which they conceived to be Greek music. An attempt at a declamatory setting of the scene of Ugolino, in Dante's *Inferno*, was made by Galilei, the father of the celebrated mathematician; he wrote it for one voice, and performed it with an accompaniment on the viola.¹ Caccini and Viadana followed in his footsteps; but the first result of any real importance was attained by Peri, who set to music an *intermezzo* called *Daphne*, and made use of a style which became the progenitor of our recitative.

Anno 1600, on the occasion of Marie de' Medici's marriage with Henry IV. of France, *una tragedia per musica*, called *Euridice*, composed by Peri and Caccini, was performed, and received with unbounded enthusiasm. It was, in fact, the first opera. It contained all the elements of the modern opera—recitatives, airs, ballet tunes in an embryonic state. The instruments representing the orchestra on that occasion were a harpsichord, a large guitar, a viol, a large lute, and several flutes; all of which were placed behind the scenes.

¹ He afterwards tried his hand at some of Jeremiah's Lamentations in a similar manner.

It would be useless to crowd the page with an enumeration of titles and dates. Suffice it to say that, in the course of the following two centuries, Italian opera progressed rapidly, and made its way to all the courts of Europe.

About 1660 Count Mazarin transplanted it to France, where, in the hands of Jean Baptiste Lully,¹ an Italian by birth, but a thorough Frenchman in spirit, and his successor, Jean Philippe Rameau, a native of Dijon, it put on a French *surtout*.

In England the opera has always been an exotic, though frequent attempts were made, from Purcell's day downwards, to establish opera in English. London possessed an Italian opera on a magnificent scale in Handel's time, for which he wrote numerous interesting pieces; but it was as alien an affair then as it is now. Foreign singers and players performed the works

¹ The Italian Lully possessed as infallible an instinct for the peculiar accents and cadences of the French language as the German Handel evinced for those of the English. He used to declaim his words incessantly until the appropriate musical phrase was, as it were, spontaneously generated from out of them.

Lully invented the form of the overture, and introduced the ballet. His overtures consist usually of a broad slow movement, (*largo*), followed by a spirited fugato (*allegro*); to which occasionally a *menuet* or some other dance tune is added by way of coda. The formal construction of these pieces was followed for a long time, and every one is still familiar with it, as shown in the introduction to Handel's *Messiah*, or to his *Samson*.

The ballet has remained a *sine quâ non* with French *grand opéra* to this day. Furthermore, Lully augmented the means of dramatic effect, by giving to the chorus a larger and more important share in the performance.

Born half a century after Lully, Jean Philippe Rameau, a great theorist, and a first-rate organ and harpsichord player, began writing for the stage when he was fifty years of age. His melodic movements are richer than Lully's; he treats both chorus and orchestra with greater boldness, and produces powerful and characteristic effects. Thus we have a storm, a battle, an earthquake, depicted with remarkable cleverness, if the low state of instrumental technique of his time be allowed for. Lully and Rameau were the great men of the French lyric stage until the advent of Gluck, in the second half of the eighteenth century.

No. 187.—VOL. XXXII.

of foreign composers in a foreign language. Russia too had, and has, its Italian opera, and encourages by the side of it, as England does, more or less fruitless essays in the native tongue.

In Germany, up to the Napoleonic wars, every little duodecimo copy of Louis XIV., every little princelet, thought it his duty to keep an Italian opera troupe. There was besides at Hamburg, just before the 18th century, a chance of opera in German taking root, but things did not get beyond an embryonic state at that time.

Thus in Germany, as in England and Russia, the Italians and Frenchmen had it all to themselves up to the days of Mozart and Weber. The Italians, prompted in some measure by the genius of their language, went on developing operatic melody and the art of singing at all hazards; whilst Frenchmen, who have a more pronounced instinct for the stage, and whose speech is far less sonorous than that of the Italians, cultivated energetic declamation and dramatic propriety as far as these could be attained under the shadow of their *grand monarque's* pompous periwig.

Before going on to the more modern phases of operatic development, a few general remarks are necessary.

In all times and climes wherein the spoken drama has reached full maturity, we can trace its origin and earliest growth to the public life of the people. It springs up and flourishes spontaneously, like any tree or flower.

Greek tragedy arose from the hymns sung in honour of Dionysos. The Spanish drama grew, as did the English Elizabethan, out of the miracle plays which, during the middle ages, were performed and witnessed by the people at large. The German stage, which brought forth such noble fruit in the works of Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller, had its humble origin with the little itinerant troupe of players who, after the Thirty Years' War, set up their booths at fairs and other public gatherings. Everywhere we perceive a close and intimate relation between the people

and the players, and incessant action and reaction from one side upon the other; thus gradually the drama attains an exuberant vitality, an individuality of its own, and in the end comes to be truly national. Now the opera has no such popular origin to boast of. It is a production resulting from insufficient theoretical speculation rather than from any healthy national impulse, which, properly speaking, it has never felt. It was forced on an artificial hot-bed, under the protection of royalty and aristocracy. It was an amusement of luxurious courts, rather than a mirror in which a nation could recognize its own image.

The operative *dramatis personæ* have always been mere typical personages, shepherd and shepherdess, prince and princess, king and queen, contrived, without the smallest regard to individuality, nationality, or any other essential qualification. It was left to the theatrical tailor to render them Roman, Assyrian, Hottentot, or anything else, according to the geographical origin of the story selected by the librettist. The secondary characters listened to the confessions of the prince's and princess's loves and hates, whilst the chorus acted as background and *étalage*. The passions depicted were regulated in accordance with the rules of court etiquette. The heroes of antiquity were presented by *castrati*. You might hear an Achilles or an Alexander with a bushy beard and a high soprano voice, giving vent to his heroic courage in the tenderest shakes and sweetest *fiorituri*. Instead of poetical richness in the portrayal of noble emotions, the opera offered a fabulous pomp and glitter; instead of a representation of high characters in their conflicts with each other and with fate, it gave bespangled and bedizened puppets who struck tragic attitudes to show off their fine voices and fluent execution. A good play is a well-proportioned organism, with a poetical life of its own; an opera is a mere conglomerate of isolated pieces of music, for the display of which the dramatic action serves as a scaffolding.

The operatic forms, *recitative-secco*, *aria* and *ballet* tune have remained

sterile; and they exhibit to this day, though composers make use of them on a much larger scale, the same essentially undramatic stamp of artificiality they had at the beginning. When the Italian *illuminati* first started the opera, they were firmly persuaded that they had laid the foundation for a genuine drama on the Greek model. But the influence of the luxurious Italian courts was overwhelming. The opera inevitably became a means of sensually enjoying fine voices and splendid singing. No ordinary composer could hope to hold his own against the overwhelming tyranny of vocal *virtuosi*.

The musician's art sank to a mere business calling; it consisted in the facility of producing endless variations upon the same dull type of *aria*. The composer was the humble servant of all singers; and the librettist, I dare not call him poet, was the very humble servant of the composer. "Dere is my music," said Handel, drumming on the harpsichord, "dere is my music, Sir; now you go make words to dat." From the first no one dreamt of constructing a libretto so as to give its dramatic subject-matter a clear and sufficient exposition. Who cared or who cares about dramatic propriety when listening to an Italian opera? It was considered sufficient, and it is still, if a libretto gave the best singers a chance of appearing frequently in the course of the performance, if the two best singers had a chance of singing a duet; and, in case there was a third, fourth, or sixth best singer, that they all could meet before the footlights and sing a trio, quartet, or sestet, as the case might be.

In our day, when all the phenomena are before us, when all the capacities for good and evil in the opera have been developed to the uttermost, it is easy to point out the source of the evil. Those who invented the opera imagined themselves to be founding a drama in which music was the highest attainable means of emotional expression. But instead of the poet constructing a play in accordance with the laws of his art, and the musician afterwards intensifying the

passions and sentiments embodied, the matter was unfortunately reversed; and the musician dictated the dramatic form, the sequence and dimensions of scenes, and even the shape in which the characters were to deliver their speeches. Thus the operatic stage came to be a circus, wherein the musician mounted his parade horse, and the poor poet was constrained to saddle the steed and most humbly to hold the stirrup.

From the first opera to the last, there are two conflicting tendencies noticeable. On the one hand we see the high and somewhat vague aspirations of men of literary culture who wish to transform the opera into a kind of ideal drama on the Greek model; this is in the main Wagner's side, also that of Gluck and his immediate successors, and in some measure, though quite unconsciously, also the side of Mozart, Beethoven, and Weber. On the other hand there is the frivolous leaning in the direction of vulgar theatrical amusement, wherein all imaginable artistic luxuries, music, dancing, acting, painting, costumes, fireworks, and what not, are muddled together, so as to produce a few hours of intoxicating diversion. This is the side represented by Rossini, Meyerbeer, Verdi, Offenbach, and so on down the scale of operatic celebrities.

Let us look a little nearer at some of these composers—first at Gluck, a dramatic genius, and most powerful musician. Some years before he arrived in Paris, in 1773, party strife ran high between the adherents of pure Italian opera, with its sensuous delight in suave melody and fine singing, and the partisans of the declamatory and dramatically effective French opera of Lully and Rameau, with its musical phraseology, regulated in some measure by the laws of prosody. Up to his forty-eighth year Gluck had served, like all composers of his time whose livelihood depended upon their pleasing the nobility, in the ranks of the Italian opera; and he had not unfrequently given offence by allowing his supreme dramatic instincts to trample upon the rules of musical etiquette then in vogue. His reformatory projects waxed stronger

when his social position as a renowned composer had consolidated itself. In Vienna he met with a librettist, Calzabigi, who entered into his views, and they produced together, in 1762-66, *Orfeo* and *Alceste*, two works which mark the beginning of a new epoch.

Gluck, in the first place, put a stop to the absurd pretensions of singers; he was determined to be the autocrat of his entertainment, and he brooked no interference on the part of his executants. In his later works for the Parisian opera he tried to confine music (these are his own words) "to its true province, that of seconding poetry by strengthening the expression of the sentiments and the interest of the situation, without interrupting the action, or weakening it by superfluous ornament." He thought music ought to give that aid to poetry which the liveliness of colouring and the happy distribution of light and shade afford to a correct and well-designed picture, in animating the figures without injuring their contours. He therefore carefully avoided interrupting a singer in the warmth of dialogue in order to wait for a tedious *ritornello*; or stopping him in the midst of a speech in order to display the agility of the voice in a long passage—in a word, his sole aim was dramatic truth and propriety.

He did not think it right to pass rapidly over the second part of an air, when it happened to be the most impassioned and important portion of it, so as to give the customary four repetitions of the words; or to finish where the sense was not complete, in order to give the singer a chance of showing how he could vary a passage in several ways according to his own fancy—which abuses were *de rigueur* in the old-fashioned *aria*. He thought that the overture should make the audience aware of the character and subject of the piece, that the instrumental accompaniments should be regulated by the interest of the drama, and ought not to interpose a void in the dialogue between the recitative and the air; that the music should not break into the sense and connection of a period, nor

interrupt the warmth and energy of the action. It was his opinion, that the chief care of a dramatic composer should be to aim at simplicity, and he accordingly avoided making a parade of difficulties at the expense of perspicuity; he attached no value to the discovery of musical novelties, unless they arose naturally from the situation of the characters and the expression of the poetry; nor was there any traditional rule of composition which he was not willing to sacrifice to the production of a good effect. Opinions such as these certainly show a critical acumen, the like of which no musician before Gluck had evinced.

Gluck, however, did not see the entire evil as we see it. The times were not ripe for that, and the opportunities for operatic extravagance were not yet exhausted. But he saw far enough to enable him to clear the atmosphere for more than half a century to come, like an invigorating thunderstorm. If anything, Gluck's librettist is more fettered than he had been with the Italian masters. For, far from being real dramas, Gluck's operas remained a conglomerate of separate airs, recitatives, and dance tunes. But it cannot be stated too often, or too emphatically, that they consisted throughout of the purest and noblest music, entirely free from claptrap or bombast, and full of veritable dramatic fire. After *Orfeo* and *Alceste* had created a sensation among the musicians of Vienna, Gluck produced his two *Iphigénies* and *Armida*, at Paris.

The educated section of the French public enthusiastically acknowledged his dramatic supremacy, in spite of the most violent opposition from the partisans of Italian opera. Side by side with the rival performances of Italian and French operas, a paper war, in which the most eminent writers of France took part, was carried on with pamphlets, letters, poems, epigrams, &c. In the end Gluck gained the day; and the stamp of his master mind has been felt on the French stage till long after the advent of Rossini.¹

¹ Gluck's successors at the *grand opéra*—Cherubini, Méhul, and Spontini—carried on

Though Gluck had many imitators, his true successor was Mozart, whose greatest successes belong to the operatic stage. Mozart's radiant genius, like that of Raphael, whom he resembles in many respects, had an eclectic turn. Like Raphael he extracted congenial nourishment from various styles and schools; he absorbed and assimilated the separate and isolated perfections of different nationalities; he concentrated the achievements of his German, French, and Italian precursors into one comprehensive focus. Brought up in the midst of that severe and solid school of German instrumental music, which from Sebastian Bach to Haydn flourished so amazingly, he mastered the suave secret of Italian melodious phraseology, and felt the irresistible charm of pure Italian singing; he grasped the meaning of Gluck's reform with the firm hand of genius; and he united these various elements of perfection in works which are, as it were, an apotheosis of them all. Mozart's was perhaps the richest musical organization which has ever existed. He would most certainly have accomplished the metamorphosis of the opera into a perfect musical drama if he had met with the right poet. But this was not to be. He was careless in the choice of his texts, and some of the librettists he worked with served him so badly that much of his exquisite music could not keep the stage. As it is he has made the most of

the reformatory movement in his spirit. We owe to them, the dramatic musical *ensemble*. Of course neither Gluck's operas, nor those of the Italian masters, his contemporaries, were devoid of *duetti* and *terzetti*: yet the main character of all these works had been that of monologue. They maintained Gluck's forms of airs and recitatives, but they widened and enlarged them as far as it was possible without overstepping them. An especially noticeable feature of their productions is a much more elaborate treatment of the orchestra. Their musical powers grew at exactly the rate in which their librettists ventured to furnish more ambitious dramatic canvases. In point of musical form—and this when we talk of improvement in the mode of musical procedure is always the vital question—they have never been surpassed, and, compared with them, the meagre forms of Italian opera, which since Rossini have almost universally superseded them, appear puerile and insignificant.

every little stray waif of poetical feeling or dramatic impulse he came across in the *libretti* submitted to him; but not one of his operas can be said to be entirely satisfactory from a dramatic point of view, unless perhaps it be *Don Giovanni*. In my eyes it is one of the strongest proofs of Mozart's supreme genius and rare artistic instincts, that his work rises and falls according to the poetical significance of the task before him. There have been, and there are, musicians who could manufacture music to a *menu du dîner* with as much *gusto* as to a *Gloria in Excelsis*. He was certainly none of these. And in this he showed his relationship to Handel, whose finest music is always written to the noble words of the Bible or Milton. Mozart had many followers whom I shall pass by, as they are all Mozart and water—manner without spirit.¹

Beethoven produced but one opera, *Fidelio*, which, marvellous as it is, full of true Beethovenian fire and spirit, every scene worth ten score of the popular rubbish which has long obscured its triumph on the German stage, nevertheless occupies a very subordinate place in the glorious list of his works. It is far from marking an epoch in dramatic, as his symphonies and sonatas mark in instrumental music, and if we except the four overtures to it, three of which rank with his symphonies, the forms are Mozartian, with few if any innovations.

And now, before I turn, or rather return to the frivolous side of the matter—to the sugar plums and fireworks of Rossini, to the moonshine sentimentalities of Bellini; the couplets and *contredanses* of Auber; the revolting *olla podrida* of Meyerbeer; the *can-can* of Offenbach—before I ask the reader to descend with me this slippery staircase into a veritable

musical morass, there is but one great and earnest musician left to speak of—Carl Maria von Weber.

By the side of the cosmopolitan and eclectic Mozart, the strictly national Weber forms a strange contrast. Though as a youth he played and composed under the supervision of the eccentric Abbé Vogler, Weber can hardly be said to have had a musical training at all. To the composer of many of his youthful pieces, Herr von Lenz's rather impudent appellation of *amateur prodigue* is strictly applicable. Of a strangely original frame of mind, restlessly turning from experiment to experiment, Weber practically educated himself, and endowed as he was with the keenest dramatic instincts, he soon found his way out of the enchanted garden of his instrumental music to the operatic stage.

Weber is the originator of the German romantic opera. In his time a great revival was going on in German literature. In opposition to the classicism of Goethe and his friends, German poets began to look to the traditions of their own nation for subject-matter. The remains of mediæval manners and superstitions were illuminated with a faint glimmer of poetical life. Spanish and Hindoo dramas were being translated; Teutonic myths, legends and stories were resuscitated; and above all, the delicate flowers of German people's-song, dating far back into the middle ages, were gathered and safely housed before the breath of the present antipoeitical industrialism had entirely stifled them. To the tender voices of German Volkslieder Weber listened intently, and the whole of his operatic music became imbued with their healthy cadences and naïve charm. Without being conscious of it he came to be a better exponent of these-called romantic tendencies than the romantic writers themselves. Weber has shown German musicians what a specifically German phraseology should be like. His melodious diction furnishes in many respects the germs of Wagner's. He has enriched the art of dramatic composition in many different ways; but in his case, as in Gluck's, the fact must

¹ I ought perhaps to except Spohr, for he was possessed of a distinct individuality, though he worked in Mozart's forms. But his name belongs to the annals of instrumental music, more than to those of the opera. His soft and dreamy nature rarely gave proof of dramatic fire; and his operas, worthy as they are from a musical point of view, could not gain a firm footing.

be admitted that he did not take the last and decisive step towards the construction of a real musical drama, though he was at times very near to it. *He did not see that it was the province of the dramatic poet to dictate the forms, and of the musician to lend emotional expression only.* He tried to construct the whole drama on the basis of his Teutonic melody; and in the work wherein he strove most earnestly for this end, *Euryanthe*, his largest and his favourite opera, he failed most decidedly.¹

When, just now, I talked of descending into an operatic morass by a slippery staircase, on the last step of which I picture to myself Verdi's *Traviata* looking down upon Offenbach's *Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* actually in the mire, I placed the *divino maestro* Rossini on the landing at the top. And such a position would be appropriate for him even if he were not the first and earliest of the group of Italian and French composers I now have in view. Man of genius as he certainly was, he seems scarcely to have possessed such a thing as an artistic conscience. The fact is, that in nearly all his works the drama so earnestly striven for by the great French school of Gluck and Cherubini, is shamefully neglected, and the opera consists of operatic melody. Robert Schumann characterized Rossini's melodies with a bold metaphor—*Tizianisches Fleisch ohne Geist* (flesh à la Titian, without spirit). When Schumann said this, he probably had some *opera seria* of Rossini's, say *Tancredi* or *Semiramide*, rather than the light and sparkling pieces such as *Il Barbiere* in his mind's eye. Certainly Rossini's works are perfect orgies of melody, but of melody in the *dilettante* sense of the word, not of that noble and refined type which is to be found almost invariably in the masterpieces of Mozart and Weber. It is a kind

of melody contrived for the convenience of singers—a melody of stereotyped turns and phrases, of ever-recurring conventional *fiorituri* and commonplace *remplissage*. At times Rossini's merry and rhythmical accompaniments stand in such strange contrast to the dramatic situation, that one is tempted to imagine the composer keeping up a facetious comment, indulging in a little private *badinage* with the orchestra, just to show he is not so much in earnest as would appear from the tragic looks and gesticulations on the stage. Rossinian opera was more a matter of fashion than of art. A piece lasted for a season, and was forgotten; perhaps he warmed up bits of it, and stuck them into the next. Was not one tune as good as another? And who cared about dramatic propriety, or the like antiquated rubbish? If the public of one town liked long strings of passages, of another sweet *cantilena*, of a third endless *crescendi*, or the roll of side-drums, the master was complacent, and furnished them by the yard—*ad infinitum*. I am far from asserting that everything in Rossini was frivolous, for out of his thirty operas, so many of which have disappeared without a trace, have we not got *Il Barbiere*, the second act of *Tell*, and many single lovely things besides, scattered far and wide? I say only that he did not always work for art's sake, and that his conscience was made of rubber.

Looked at from our postulate—that the opera aims at a musical drama—Rossini's successors—Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi, all men of very real musical gifts—do not demand much attention. They merely metamorphosed Rossini's melody. Bellini rendered it sickly and sentimental; Donizetti more declamatory and common-place; Verdi blatant and violent. As for the drama they left it, if anything, in a worse plight than it had been before.

The comic opera of France, as it is represented by Auber, has this one advantage over the popular Italian works—that it is all of a piece. You are not eternally swung to and fro on a see-saw,

¹ The poor poetess, Helmine von Chezy, who wrote the text of *Euryanthe* for Weber, was nearly driven out of her senses (never very many) by the endless changes and alterations he proposed and insisted on for the sake of his melody.

alternating between highly impassioned melody and mere musical sawdust. French librettists have a sure and safe theatrical method, which acts as a wholesome check upon their exuberant gaiety so apt to be extravagant; and French composers of *vaudevilles* and *opéras comiques*, from Isouard and Boieldieu to Auber, have known how to keep their style up to the mark supplied by their librettists. I look upon Auber's sprightly tunes as the *beau-ideal* of both characteristic phases of French music—the *couplet* and the *contredanse*. Frenchmen have instinctively felt the representative character of Auber's music, and they have accordingly bestowed their special favour more upon his numerous productions for the *opéra comique* than upon his veritable masterpiece, *La Muette de Portici*, wherein he takes a flight far higher and reaches a greater artistic eminence. In fact, *Masaniello*, as the work is called in England, is, in as much as intensity of effect and originality of musical treatment are concerned, far beyond the narrow though amusing range of modern French operas. The extraordinary *verve* and fire, and the pointed conciseness with which Auber manipulated his materials, are worthy of high praise. Unfortunately, neither Auber nor Scribe (his favourite librettist) in their later works thought fit to advance in the direction of quick and decisive action and drastic brevity of musical exposition, which might have led them towards the drama we have in view.

But if Rossini's artistic conscience was of a very elastic nature, it may be asserted with at least equal truth that Meyerbeer did not possess such a thing at all. He wanted to succeed at any risk or cost, and he managed to succeed accordingly.

If one looks beneath the drastic *coups de théâtre*, the scenical pomp and glitter, the dazzling brilliancy of orchestral colour, at the specifically musical gifts displayed in one of Meyerbeer's monster operas, one finds them surprisingly meagre. Taking into consideration the number of genuine and powerfully

emotional effects he produces in *Robert, Les Huguenots* and *Le Prophète*, one is astonished to find, on closer examination, how poor the melodious kernel of his work really is; but he was by nature excessively clever. Whatever of a technical sort a musician can gain from the example of predecessors and contemporaries, he quickly assimilated. From the Italians he derived the popular manner of treating the human voice; from the French and Germans the refined and complicated method of handling the orchestra. And in the course of a protracted experience, by dint of incessant exertion, he managed to develop his keen instinct for bizarre and telling instrumental combinations and stage effects, into a most formidable dramatic power.

Meyerbeer began his career with sacred odes to Klopstock's texts, and with an oratorio. His first opera, *Jephtha's Daughter*, was itself a semi-oratorio. When about 1818 he came to Italy and found Rossini's star in the ascendant, he quickly changed his tactics and manufactured operas in the Italian style. When in 1831 *Robert* was given in Paris, he had again adopted an entire change of procedure. There he tries to unite German science with Italian melody and French *raffinement*. His rapid changes of æsthetic creed were not the result of any organic development of his nature; they were much more a matter of calculation. His elaborate attempts to unite all the elements of the opera—good and bad—side by side, into one gorgeous and dazzling *pot-pourri*, remind one of the story¹ of the newly-baptized Turk who liked the wine which his Christian religion did not forbid, but who chose to enjoy it together with a little Mohammedan polygamy.

The libretti of Scribe, most versatile of French librettists, are, as a rule, distinguished by remarkable cleverness of construction, by very ingenious use of stage effects and contrivances, and by an apparent absence of effort in the conception

¹ Told by Riehl in his *Musikalische Charakterköpfe*.

and execution. But in the opera books which he concocted for Meyerbeer, Scribe seems to have lost all natural ease and spontaneity, he worries and tortures himself and his public with extravagance after extravagance, with effort after effort, all brought forward only to create a sensation at any cost, and with little or no reference to the original idea of the piece. It is not to be supposed that an experienced and *rusé* dramatist like Scribe would have so frantically troubled himself, had not that most restless and ambitious of musicians with whom he was associated imperatively required so eccentric a canvas for his intrinsically dry, yet pretentious, music. Technically considered, *Robert le Diable* is the most important of Meyerbeer's works, though the stride in advance from this piece to *Les Huguenots* is enormous. In the latter, he has repeatedly reached a climax of dramatic effect, such as neither he himself nor any one else (if we except Wagner, who works with different means to totally different ends) has again attained or surpassed. But *Robert* inaugurated a new era at the *Grand Opéra*—the era of the greatest splendour and the greatest rottenness.

At the time when *Robert le Diable* was written, the French *école romantique*, with Victor Hugo at the head, was in full bloom. The influence of Byron and Hoffman was felt and acknowledged by all claimants to poetical honours. Ghosts and devils, fierce love, hate, murder and madness, formed indispensable ingredients to every novel or play. The reading public was greedy of eccentricity, and

the most violent contrasts could not appease its appetite for horrors. It was to satisfy the craving for such highly seasoned sentimental food that Scribe began to concoct an opera book which should be a veritable *ne plus ultra*. He took for his hero the devil himself—*Sathanas in propria persona*—gave him a coating of new Parisian varnish, transformed him into an extravagantly affectionate father, cooked him with *sauce piquante* of resuscitated dancing nuns, and then served him up to his friend Meyerbeer, who set him to the most appropriate and effective music, and exhibited him, with unheard-of splendour, at the *Grand Opéra*.

We must give Meyerbeer credit for having understood the moral, or rather immoral wants of his time to perfection, and for having managed to concoct, with marvellous ingenuity, the highly spiced and unwholesome food demanded by Parisian audiences.

But it is just in *his* works that the intrinsic hollowness and rottenness of the *genre* called opera is more apparent than those of all his predecessors; it is the natural and inevitable opposition to the shameful abuses sanctioned by him, that has at length grown into a revolution which appears destined to clear the musical stage, and make room for purer and loftier aims.

The opera, then, has ceased to live; and what we have now before us is the piteous spectacle of Monsieur Offenbach, with his friends, dancing the *can-can* around its dead body!

In another paper we hope to pursue the history of its resuscitation.

E. DANNREUTHER.

ALKAMAH'S CAVE: A STORY OF NEJD.

PART III.

AFTER leaving the hut, Alkamah and his companion, or rather guide, continued their journey for twelve days more, going to the East. They were now in a poor, but by no means uninhabited region; and seldom found themselves for many hours together out of sight of either a plantation, or a garden, or a group of huts, occasionally even a walled village. Nor had they anything here to apprehend from positive ill-will on the part of the inhabitants, between whom and those of upper Nejd there was habitually too little intercourse for either friendliness or enmity. Shelter from the heat, whether under trees or beneath cottage roofs, was easily to be had; while of water, though tepid and somewhat brackish, there was seldom a deficiency, for there are many wells, and at short intervals, in this sandy tract. Unfortunately, the tribes of these valleys, the Arabs, of Bishr and Dowasir, at all times a niggardly and uncourteous race, though not absolutely refusing the necessary hospitality, supplied it grudgingly; and showed themselves always readier to speed the parting than to welcome the coming guest.

Both the travellers' condition, since their halt in Jandeb and her mother's cabin, had undergone a great change, alike in body and mind. Shebeeb had become and remained henceforth stronger, more cheerful, more ready for exertion every way than before; his spirits were raised; from time to time he even sang—if that most inharmonious of all noises that an Arab herdsman makes, when he imagines himself musical, can be called singing—above all he was more sedulously alive to every want of his foster-brother's, and assumed

a constant care of him, amounting almost to authority.

Alkamah's state warranted this, for the sudden renovation of his strength and health consequent on Jandeb's influence while present, had, with distance passed away almost as suddenly, and was succeeded by a weakness and exhaustion that grew on him and increased every hour. His courage too was broken; the certainty of Selma's marriage, hardly realized when first heard of, now sank by degrees deeper and deeper into his mind, and, while it did not calm his intense longing for meeting her again, took away all hopeful prospects from the idea of that meeting. "I am dying," he would often say to Shebeeb, "and I desire nothing else; only die I cannot till I have seen her, she herself must set me free, and the sooner the better, would it were to-day. Death perhaps may reunite what life has parted; she will not, I feel, long remain separated from me." And in this mood he pressed forward with redoubled impatience, as if fearing to be too late; his mental excitement increasing while the term of his journey drew nearer. Sustained by this alone, he no longer faltered, but sat firm and upright on his camel, though each day more gaunt and shadow-like; looking neither right nor left, but straight before him, and indifferently abandoning all care of food or rest to his companion's arrangement.

Twelve days of road, along the broad bush-sprinkled gully that crosses more than half the peninsula; on their left the mountain ranges of Nejd, and low undulating slopes of pastureland, subsiding into desert, on their right. But on the afternoon of the thirteenth day they saw before them, low down in the

far haze, a jagged blue line, with purple stains of shadow; the rocky hills of Hareek; at their base, though hidden as yet from sight, stretched—this Shebeeb knew—the pastures, the fertile plains, the groves, gardens, and populous villages of Yemamah. Gladly he pointed out the fantastic horizon-fringe to his foster-brother, and told him that there lay their goal.

But next morning they had again lost sight of it, for now they entered the intervening region, an intricate labyrinth of narrow valleys and small abrupt hills, with frequent groves, which might almost by courtesy be called forests, of acacia and tamarisk; puzzling to travellers, but affording welcome shadow from the midday sun. Here were no human habitations, large or small; not even a chance shepherd or Bedouin, from whom they could inquire whether they were on the right track or not; had Alkamah been alone, it would have gone hard with him to find his way. Shebeeb, however, knew that not far from them on the left, though concealed from view by a close succession of steep hills, commenced the level grounds of Yemamah; but he kept his knowledge to himself, lest his comrade's impatience on learning it should urge their entering abruptly on the open country, where they could not fail to be recognized for strangers, and would thus naturally become the objects of a curiosity which might endanger the attainment of the scope of their journey, and even their lives. Never could they less afford to be incautious than now.

In this manner at a slackened pace, and often stopping to consider their direction, they wandered on among the hills for three days; by the morning of the fourth they had reached the verge of the broken country, which here changed its character, passing into the bare sheer rocks of Hareek. They had, in their ignorance of the precise localities, approached much nearer than they thought to the villages behind this dreary screen; but Shebeeb was growing anxious, for their slight supply of food

and water had almost failed. Nor did he see, among the crags overhead and the dry sand under their feet, any prospect of replenishing their store. All at once looking round at Alkamah, he perceived from his face and manner that a deadly faintness had come over him, so that he was evidently incapable of proceeding any further. What was to be done? Linger where they were was out of the question: advancing equally so. Then Shebeeb noticed on their right the entrance of a narrow gorge, which his eye, accustomed to the peculiarities of scenery like this, knew must in all probability lead to some secluded spot, where his foster-brother could rest a while without risk of being discovered till his faintness might have passed off and his strength rallied. It was indeed, though he knew it not, Alkamah's predestined resting-place, but one he was never to leave more. Hither Shebeeb led the unresisting camels; a chill came over him as they passed into the shadow of the overhanging crag, and he shivered. On the sand near the entry, a whitened skull lay in a corner of the rock. Alkamah saw it, and smiled. "A companion," he said; "he will not refuse me a share of his resting-place."

They were now fairly within the valley, shut in on every side by iron brown crags, and in front of them the cavern at the further end. At its mouth they halted their camels and dismounted. "This is just the place," thought Shebeeb, but, before going into the cave himself, he prudently took up a stone from the many lying about, and threw it in as far as he could, to rouse any wild beast or dangerous snake that might have made its lair in the cool darkness. But when the ringing echoes had died away, all was silent again; nothing came out or stirred. He tried a second, the result was the same. Then, though still cautiously, he entered, a knife in hand, and explored the hollow. When his sight, at first baffled, became accustomed to the gloom, he found that he was in an expanding vault, of more width than depth, high enough to allow of stand-

ing upright, and, to his great satisfaction, without any crevasses or smaller openings that he could discover leading further into the rock. Within the cave itself there was hiding room enough, a dozen men at least might easily have concealed themselves in its dark recess.

Having made sure of all this, he came out and found Alkamah half-seated, half-leaning against the rock close by, but helpless, and like one at his last gasp. With some difficulty he lifted him up in his arms and carried him into the cavern. There he laid him as best he could out of sight from the entrance, and bringing in the saddles, placed one of them for a pillow under his companion's head. Next he fetched the nearly empty water-skins, and poured what little water remained, a muddy draught, into a wooden cup which Jandeb's mother had given him, this he put by Alkamah's side, and within his reach, along with a few dry dates, the only remnants of their provisions for the way. Having done this, he left the cave, intending without loss of time to explore the neighbourhood, in view of help, or at least, of information.

Keeping his steps on rock and stone wherever possible, and carefully effacing all traces of his own or the camel's footprints in the patches of light sand between, he stole forth, and once again in the main valley gazed anxiously about him in every direction; but no sign of man or beast was discoverable anywhere. Hardly knowing whether to be pleased or disappointed at this loneliness, he bethought him of climbing the rocks on the higher side, the left, whence he expected to command a more extensive view. They were well-nigh precipitous; but sure of hand and foot he had soon reached the summit, and looked over. To his surprise, his eye rested on a green plain immediately below, coming up to the very foot of the mountain, and stretching far away north, almost to the horizon verge. Here and there its gently undulating lines were broken by dark masses of palm-groves; and not very

far off on one side stood a group of tents, the very ones perhaps, so he thought, that they had travelled so far to reach. Nearer, however, in view was a good-sized village, girdled with gardens and watered fields, and this he determined first to visit, as offering him the best chance of procuring some kind of refreshment for his helpless and stricken companion; here too he did not doubt to learn the truth or otherwise of what Jandeb had told them; and to gain some notion of the means they had best adopt, should the encampment in sight prove to be really that of Okeyl.

While Shebeeb was thus employed, Alkamah, who had returned to consciousness, lay still in the cave, too feeble to rise, and well aware that he had reached the halting-place that was to be his last. His thoughts, meanwhile, wandered back to Batn-Darih, and the camp of Benoo-Morad by the walls of Roweydah. However much the knowledge of Selma's after-marriage had grieved, it had not surprised him; it had not even weakened his conviction that she was, in heart and soul at least, faithful to him now as then; the Selma of three years back. He called to mind the love of those past days, past, yet ever present—the look, the smile, the meetings, the promises, the endearments, the mutual pledge, the embrace at parting; and could not now, even had he striven to do so, picture her to himself other than she then had been. If in after days she had indeed conferred her hand on another, it must, it could only have been, under the conviction that his own was no longer able to clasp it; she might be the wife of Okeyl, but not for that could she have ceased to be the love, the only love, of Alkamah. So his fancy imaged her. Nor was the image wholly, or in the main untrue. For in truth while hope had yet been hers, she had resisted every attack on her plighted constancy, and nothing but the certitude, it seemed, that her hope had perished with her lover's life had reconciled her to admit her cousin's urgent suit.

While thus thinking, his gaze wan-

dered at random round the rock-walls of the cave, now dimly visible in the gloom to which he had become in a measure accustomed; then rested on the metallic glimmer of his silver signet-ring. It was the same with which she had toyed at their last meeting; the same she had jestingly promised to reclaim some future day. The same—but now, lest it should slip off the emaciated finger for which it was all too large, he had been obliged to wind it tightly round and fasten it with a twist of thread. Would her fingers ever touch it again? they must—they should! As he looked at it he gained strange hope and strength from the sight of this unfulfilled yet unbroken link between him and her; soon he thought the meaning would be accomplished—the promise redeemed. Patiently he awaited the evening and the return of his foster-brother, through hours that seemed neither long nor short, few nor many; too much under the dominion of one unchanging idea to keep account of event or time.

Meanwhile, the sunlight, which only for a short interval at noon could find its way to illuminate the sand-floor of the narrow valley, had withdrawn upwards from rock to rock, till it lingered on the highest splinters alone, then left them. Darkness was about to set in when Shebeeb re-entered the cave, bringing with him from the village provisions that by contrast might half be reckoned delicacies, and, what Alkamah most desired, a supply of fresh cool water. But of the food he was scarcely able to take any share, and it remained almost entirely for Shebeeb, who, having rendered his companion every service in his power, now sat down by his side to eat, and to give his tidings.

They were good ones on the whole. From the actual place of half-concealment to the nearest village, that of Jorif, was a distance of less than two hours; and the pasture-grounds occupied by Okeyl the Yemenee, as the villagers called him, were not much further off, in fact the herdsmen were in the

habit of coming to Jorif for barter or purchase. Okeyl was well known to all; they described him as wealthy, generous, and, though a stranger, popular. He had arrived, they said, more than a year before, with a large retinue of followers, shepherds, and the like; besides camels and flocks in great abundance, and had settled on a piece of land assigned him by the native chiefs of Benoo-Tameem, with whom he was on the most friendly terms. What had been the precise reason for his quitting Yemen, and establishing himself in Yemamah, was not generally known, probably some dispute with his own kinsmen about marriage matters, for he had brought with him, they said, a wife of his own, that is the Morad, tribe, but no children. It was also said that he had often been urged to divorce his wife, and marry another, but that he had always refused to do so, perhaps this had something to do with his departure from Nejran. Lastly, they said that his wife was renowned for her beauty, and that all spoke well both of him and her.

Alkamah listened, and his imagination filled up the outlines of the story with much that was un conjectured by Shebeeb. But now came the main question, difficult to answer, what was to be done next? They had in one sense reached the goal, yet in another seemed further from it than before. While in the vigour of unimpaired strength and youth, Alkamah had planned many plans, dreamed many dreams, and might, not unlikely, have carried them into effect too; for many a lover in Arabia, denied his wish by family opposition, has carried off triumphantly the loved one by force of arms, or died at her feet in the attempt; and Alkamah, whose courage and passion were well equal to either result, would have had precedents in plenty for both. But now, unable not only to mount a horse and wield a sword, but even to move a limb or rise from the ground, and with his life itself at the ebb, which he well knew has no flow after it, these were mere imaginings, and must as such be abandoned. All

that could practically be effected would be to acquaint Selma with the fact of his being in the neighbourhood, a weary dying man, and to leave the rest to woman's ingenuity and woman's love. But it must be done quickly.

Midnight came, and as nothing could be attempted before morning, they must needs wait its breaking; Shebeeb in the deep sleep that follows fatigue, Alkamah would fain have slept too, but the fever returned, and when dawn came, it found him weaker than before. Shebeeb saw, with alarm, the change in his companion's face, and when he had tended him to the best of his abilities for a little while, hastened to set out without loss of time on fresh research, justly thinking that there was danger in delay. Nor was he long absent; chance or destiny favoured his endeavours, and shortly after noonday he returned, and with him another. This was a somewhat undersized man, lightly built, and of dusky, almost negro, complexion, which, with the striped mantle hanging down over his shoulders, announced him at first sight for a native of Nejran or Yemen. It was in fact one of Okeyl's own herdsmen, whom Shebeeb had fallen in with just as he was entering the village of Jorf, and had persuaded to turn back and accompany him to the cave.

Within it Alkamah was lying in miserable plight, drowsy and wandering in mind, heedless of everything. But the approach of footsteps roused him a little; and when his dim eyes had distinguished the unaccustomed form that stood by Shebeeb, he conjectured what had happened, and at once came to himself. Eager to learn more, he even managed to lift himself on his elbow from the ground; while the herdsman stared in surprise, almost terror, at the wild and ghastly appearance of the death-stricken man before him.

"You, brother, are one of Okeyl the Yemencee's retainers, of Benoo-Morad, are you not?" asked Alkamah, in a faint though distinct voice. The herdsman answered in the affirmative.

A minute's silence followed, while

Alkamah collected his strength for further questioning; and Shebeeb, taking up the discourse, related the circumstances under which he had met the man who had that very morning seen Okeyl at the door of the tent where was his family, meaning his wife. This the herdsman confirmed.

"Do you ever," Alkamah again asked, articulating the words with difficulty, "come near"—he could not say "your master's wife," but—"the daughter of Malik, so as to be able to speak with her?"

"Often," replied the man. Had so strange a question been put under any other circumstances he would certainly have been startled by it, and either would have hesitated to answer it, or not have answered at all. But there was in Alkamah's appearance, in his manner, his look, his tone, something of authority—the authority that earnestness combined with much suffering never fail to give—that admitted neither of dalliance nor bargain. So feeling himself in a manner constrained not barely to answer, but to explain fully, he went on. "I have at present charge of the milch-goats belonging to the camp; and it is my duty every evening at sunset to bring a bowl of fresh milk for my master's family to her tent. If any of the servants happen to be by, I give it them to take in; but very often I find her outside the tent by herself, and then, if she asks me, I fill a cup and hand it her to drink."

Without putting any further question, or saying a word, Alkamah slowly unwound the thread twisted round his finger, and drew off the signet ring. Beckoning the herdsman to come close to his side, he put the ring into his open hand; and said, "Brother, when next she asks you for a draught of milk, slip this ring into the bowl first; it will bring good to you and to her. I charge you do it." And having thus spoken, he laid his head back upon the saddle that served it for pillow, and closed his eyes.

The herdsman remained standing, turning the silver circlet round and

round in the palm of his hand, and looking uneasily at it; for he was at a loss to understand what might be the meaning of such a commission, and more than half afraid lest some harm or treachery might be intended by it, to which his compliance would give effect.

He would have inquired of the giver, but from him he soon perceived no further explanation was to be had; he therefore looked instead towards Shebeeb, who, perceiving what was in his mind, said whatever might tend to reassure him; carefully confirming in particular Alkamah's hint as to the handsome reward he might expect for himself, and insisting that no mischief of any kind could possibly follow, either to his mistress or to others, only good. But when the man went on to ask what was the sick man's name, who he was, whence he came, what had brought him here, what was the hidden meaning of the ring, and so forth, Shebeeb, after a few evasive answers cut him short; enjoining him to take the first opportunity of fulfilling what he had been told to do, and in the meantime to say not a word to any person whatever, either where he had been, or what he had seen or heard. Of all this he exacted and obtained a solemn promise; and then, with a "God speed," sent the simple fellow away.

This over, he turned to his brother-in-law, intending to talk the matter over with him, by way of comfort and encouragement. But on approaching him, he perceived by the calm and regular breathing that Alkamah had fallen into a quiet sleep, from which it would be a pity to rouse him. So he sat down at his side, thoughtful, and waiting what the events of the day might bring forth, till night came, and all was dark.

Without, on the plains of Yemamah, it was the full-aged year; dates hung in ripe clusters from the dusty trees; great melons were yellow in the gardens, grain of every sort had already been gathered in, and the shrubs and grass, except, it might be, in the immediate neighbourhood of some flowing watercourse, already wore the brown and dried up

tints that told of the summer-season advanced to its hottest. No one now, except those whose occupations compelled them to be continually out of doors, remained in the fields while the blazing sun rode high in heaven, and even those most inured to its beams sought to protect themselves as much as possible from them, under some overhanging rock or sheltering tree, not venturing out of their shelter unless when it became absolutely necessary to do so. The very village roofs and walls, always baked and dry, looked doubly so in the white glare; the gates stood wide open, but for hours together no figure passed them, entering or issuing out. Meanwhile the tents—there were about twenty of them, large and small,—pitched by Okeyl of Morad for himself and his followers, stood in their places, black, silent, and seemingly deserted almost all the day through; no living creature was to be seen moving about amongst them; the men were for the most part away, either with the herds on the grazing-grounds, or under cover of house or garden in one or other of the neighbouring villages; while the women remained within the canvas shelter of the camp, occupied in household duties, or idle, chattering, or drowsy, as the case might be.

Then the daily scene would change, and as the declining sun hurried downwards to the jagged lines of fantastic rock and mountain on the West, and the palm-groves dotted over the surface of the level lands cast each its streak of shadow long and broad across the plain, while the still air was thick with the golden notes of the summer evening, the life that had lurked concealed from the terrible heat would re-assert itself and come forth, at first timidly as it were, then more boldly, in proportion as its oppressor weakened and withdrew. Comers and goers studded the paths, denser towards the village gates; the open lands were cheerful with herds, flocks, and men moving across them; and between the tents many forms, some male, some female, the latter more numerous just before sunset, the former

after it, might be seen passing in and out, hither and thither; or seated about the encampment in groups, talking, laughing, and watching the day go down.

That evening, on a carpet spread close by the entrance of the principal tent, distinguished from the rest by its greater size, as well as by the ornamental red fringes about its hangings, sat Selma, the daughter of Malik, the first love of Alkamah, the wife of Okeyl. No longer a girl, but in the full perfection of married womanly beauty; the beauty that confers and justifies the completeness of repose in every part, every feature—in the dark eye, the heavy tresses, the rounded outlines, the shapely form. Three years had added much to her loveliness, all that the hours add to the bud when they expand it into the flower; yet they had taken away something too, for now, in place of the sportive cheerfulness that had once sparkled in her every look and even gesture, they had cast over her, it seemed, the veil of a certain seriousness, almost sadness, which again did not become her beauty less than the garment of her girlish joyousness had done, perhaps even more.

This seriousness, sadness it could hardly be called, was due to several causes, but chiefly to three, not equally depressing in character, but none of them ever wholly absent from her mind. First, though least in weight, was her separation from the home of her birth, and the companions of her childhood, now left far away in Nejran, and from whom she was parted by what, in a land where means of communication are rare and casual, might seem an almost immeasurable distance. And though there had been much of which she might justly have complained in the conduct of her parents and relatives towards her, and even the ultimate sunderance from them had been principally brought about by their own unkindness; yet they were her parents still, and she could not wholly cease to regret them. Next, and heavier to bear, came the apprehension, the anxiety that rose with

her early every morning and lay down last with her at night, lest her want of children,—for two years of married life had passed, and still there was no sign, and, by this time, hardly an expectation, of offspring,—should sooner or later alienate from her the affection of her husband, now her only stay.

But under and besides all this, always present, though not always consciously felt, was a third and deeper melancholy; the self-accusing regret for the tall, handsome, brave, true-souled lad she had loved and left in Nejd. She thought of him indeed as of one dead: and yet, even while thus thinking, she reproached herself for having yielded to those who had persuaded her to think of him and to act as if he were so, and to accept another in his stead; she felt that by so doing she had been in a manner faithless to her first love; and when the recurring thought, "Perhaps he is still alive, still loves me," from time to time came over her, she did not know whether to wish to believe it true or not. How far too his love for her had been the cause of whatever misadventure had since befallen him, of his joining the Hejaz foray, and its fatal results, she did not distinctly know—on these topics her relatives had of course carefully kept her in the dark; but she could not otherwise than conjecture much of what really had been, and this conjecture led her to blame herself and to regret him the more. Then the fancy would cross her that had Aamir's son been really, as reported, dead, his image must by this time have faded from her memory, or at least grown indistinct: now on the contrary it haunted her day and night, increasingly fresh and vivid, yet gave her no comfort; how should it, and she another man's wife? Meanwhile her husband, who loved her fondly, observed with pain that her melancholy, which at first had not wholly surprised him, did not, as he had hoped, wear off with time; and, unsuspecting the persistence of the third cause, attributed it mentally to the first, and especially the second. So to remove the effect of these, he did all that steady kindness and affection

could suggest to remove her anxieties and regrets : and succeeded in rendering her, not indeed absolutely happy, but, unless in a few moments of capricious depression, calm and resigned.

They had been now for more than a year settled in Yemamah, on the lands belonging to the community and town of Wadih, one of the principal centres in this neighbourhood ; and Okeyl, who was generous, prudent, helpful, and brave had been speedily admitted among themselves by the chiefs of Benoo Tameem, the lords of Yemamah, almost as if he had been a born-brother of their race. They might hope also, and not unreasonably from an Arab point of view, that the want of children from his first wife, might ultimately induce him to look out for a second from amongst the daughters of their own tribe. The girls of Nejd were not, they said, inferior in beauty or other merits to those of Yemen ; and few parents but were ready to court an alliance in every respect advantageous both to themselves and to the land at large. Their hopes remained unfulfilled ; to all hints, proposals even, whether conveyed by the mustachioed lips of grave fathers or the coquettish glances of willing maidens, Okeyl continued impassive ; he loved his wife, and not even the prospect of an heir could prevail on him to grieve her with the infliction that of all others she most dreaded, a rival or a successor.

It was not however the thought of these things, nor of her home in Yemen, nor, in any distinct form at least, of love past and gone, that rendered the wife of Okeyl more pensive than usual, as this evening she sat, alone and silent, by the entry of her tent ; which, at her desire, had been arranged facing north, to receive the cooler breeze, she said,—perhaps it blew from Nejd. A maid approached, and began to speak ; Selma, oppressed with vague melancholy, and utterly undesirous of conversation, hastened to send the girl away on some trifling errand to another tent in the camp. Again alone she raised her head, looked around, and sighed, she could

not have said why. A little later, and the sun's edge rested on the horizon line, when she saw a figure coming towards her, black in the level rays ; and recognized her husband's herdsman, bringing the customary tribute of milk for the evening. He was bringing something else too ; but of that no foreboding warned her. In a few minutes more he had reached the tent, and seeing none of the servants by stood hesitating for an instant. It was an opportunity ; should he take it, and at once fulfil his commission ? Unknowingly Selma herself decided the question ; she felt thirsty, and beckoned him towards her ; he drew near and stood before her ; then, at a second sign, he poured out some of the milk from the goatskin that contained it into a little black-wood vessel, prettily inlaid with silver ornaments, and held it towards her. But while doing this he had slipped, unperceived by her,—for her thoughts were elsewhere, and she took no account of him or of his movements,—the signet ring which Alkamah had given him, into the full cup, and having done this stood by, with as much curiosity as his stolid nature was susceptible of, to watch the result.

Selma stretched out her hand, took the cup, and almost drained it, but at the moment of removing it from her lips, she thought she heard something slip back with a slight chinking noise to the bottom of the bowl ; and examining what it could be ; she perceived the glitter of metal through the shallow remnant of milk. Surprised she drew it out, looked attentively at it, and inspected the signet closely, once, twice ; and knew the token.

She turned deadly pale ; a faintness came over her, and for an instant all was blank. Yet she did not lose her presence of mind, though the effort she made to rally herself, and to conceal every outward sign of what she felt, made her tremble violently from head to foot. Then, forcing herself to look steadily up, she said, in a voice meant to be calm, but which sounded strangely hoarse and unlike her own, "How did

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you come by this? You put it in the cup; who gave it you?"

Had the man been other than what he was, something very much on a level for intelligence with the animals he had the charge of, he might there on the spot have guessed all, or nearly all, from his mistress's fixed look, her altered voice, her strained composure. But being what he was, he surmised nothing, except that there was something serious in the matter, and that he had best tell the truth. So he answered by relating, not over clearly at first, how that morning, outside the village under the western hill, he had met with a stranger, apparently a traveller from the Upper Nejd, who had talked with him and taken him to a cave in the mountain near, where he had found a sick man all alone. That from this latter he had received the ring, the same now in her hand, with directions how he was to give it her, and promises. These he had by no means forgotten, but on the contrary amplified in the telling of substantial reward if he succeeded in doing so.

Thus he told his story, lamely and confusedly enough. But Selma, though certain in the main from the first, was determined to know all, the worst as the best, without leaving the possibility of a doubt or error, and questioned the man repeatedly, till she had learnt every particular that he could relate; and Alkamah lay before her, worn and weary in the cave, distinctly imaged to her mind, with Shebeeb by him, soon recognized for the messenger and confidant of three summers before. And now! To hear was torture; yet she compelled herself, and would hear all. Only while the discourse lasted she kept glancing nervously round, in fear lest anyone should come up and put an end to her inquiries before she had had time to learn the whole; but chance favoured her, and for several minutes nobody approached that way. At last, among a group of figures slowly moving towards them she distinguished her husband—yes, it was certainly her husband—though still far off, and with

a sign, for speaking had now grown almost impossible to her, she dismissed the puzzled herdsman, by no means satisfied with the result of his day's adventure. When his back was turned Selma took the ring, kissed it again and again, and hid it in her breast; then rising slowly, for she felt stiff and heavy in every limb, re-entered the tent. There she lighted a lamp, sent away the servants, who, as is always the case, seemed to be more than usually attentive when least wanted, and sat by herself, one moment benumbed and dazed, the next all impatience, waiting till her husband should come in.

From the distance where her anxious eyes had perceived him to the tent it was not a quarter of an hour's walk. Why then was he so long in coming? an hour, two hours surely had passed, and she was still alone. A horrible dread came over her. Could it be that he had met the shepherd by the way, have questioned him? have learnt something—everything? Perhaps at this very moment he had gone full of deadly jealousy to the cave—perhaps—she shook the thought from her, rose, went to the door of the tent, and looked out. The full moon had risen in splendour: how quietly it was shining over the plain, how silent! Nothing stirred. Not far away on the glistening level she saw a broad black patch with white specks at intervals glimmering through; they were the roofs of the village of Jorî. Behind it rose the mountain wall, gigantic in the deceptive light and shadow. Lifeless, unfeeling rock; was indeed *he*, he from Nejd, lying helpless, hopeless, behind that rugged screen? and all for her! Was he thinking of her? was he not perhaps beyond all thought? dying? already dead? What should she do? She longed, longed with a torturing intensity that might have atoned for any past want of faithfulness—that would, had Alkamah known it, have effaced from his mind every thought of his own sufferings for her sake—to hasten to him that instant, to be with him, to support his head in his arms, to comfort him with words o

love; but no, it could not be, she must wait her husband; would he then never come? She looked to right, to left, eagerly over the silvered plain, fearfully to the mountain, not a moving speck was there. An age seemed to pass over her; higher and higher rose the moon, small, white, and dazzling in the east, yet no sign.

At last—after how long?—a group of figures came into sight from behind a small rising ground, where, out of her view, though not far off, they had, it seemed, been seated talking together. Now, as they separated from each other, everyone going his way home, she strained her gaze to distinguish them in the uncertain moonlight. Her husband was among them; soon he had disentangled himself from the rest, and was slowly approaching the tent. One horror at least was off her mind, that leisurely step betokened no knowledge of anything unusual on his part. She dreaded, though she had made up her mind to do it, telling him the tale; but infinitely more did she dread his learning it from any other lips than her own. If the first to speak she could, and would, throw herself on his tried generosity of heart; it was her only chance, *his* only chance; but the avowal must be of her own free making. She was not mistaken in her calculation. Resolute now, she hastened back into the inner tent to await her husband there.

The summer nights about the full moon, bright, warm, and still, are specially devoted by Arab custom to sociable conversation, and Okeyl, not in the least suspecting what awaited him on his return home, had on this occasion lingered even later than usual in talk, till it was almost midnight. Sauntering along, and stopping now and then to enjoy the pleasant air, he reached the tent, where he expected to find his wife long since gone to rest. But when he put aside the curtain he found her, to his astonishment, seated on the floor in the streaks of moonlight that entered between the joinings of the canvas, for the lamp had been extinguished some time before. She was crouched

together, her head bowed down on her knees, her face hidden in her hands. She neither moved nor uttered a word when he came in; only he thought, and was not mistaken, that he saw a shiver run over her as he entered.

He went up to her, and stood a moment at her side; she raised her face, and looked half vacantly at him, but said nothing. Doubting whether she was really awake, or under the influence of some strange night-mare, he laid his hand on hers. It was cold, icy-cold; but while he pressed it, a tear of scalding heat fell on his fingers. Now he knew that she was awake, but unhappy. Something must have happened. "Selma, dearest, what is the matter with you?" he anxiously asked. "Who—what has been grieving you?"

Strongly constituted in body and mind, he was a man of more than ordinary self-possession. Yet he started back in something not far from terror, when she sprang up suddenly, as though she had been struck through with a knife, and seized his arm.

"Oh, Okeyl—oh, my cousin," she exclaimed, "you do not know; but you must know. Listen to me,"—and her grasp tightened convulsively on his shoulder—"he—he of Roweydah is here, is close by us; he is dying, and it is I who have killed him. He did not perish, as they said, in the Hejaz; he escaped alive; he returned home, and they told him lies; they told him that I was dead, I am sure they did. I knew they would. And now he has learned the truth; and he has come here all the way from Nejd to seek me, and he is lying in a cave of these mountains—ill, dying; and, O God!"—Here she broke down with a hysterical gasp, and fell, writhing and sobbing on the ground.

She had not mentioned Alkamah's name; but her husband had at once understood whom she meant—who was near; and his face, at first pale, gradually grew dark in the moonlight. Her words, and still more her tears, her gestures, her sobs, her agony of grief,

not only told of an event, startling and embarrassing enough in itself, but further—there was no disguising it from himself—nor had she so much as attempted to conceal it—implied, or, rather, clearly showed in the speaker all the vehemence of a passion long smothered, but never extinguished; and now, flaring up in full force and heat. And this was his wife; and he, to whom this revelation was made, was her husband! Yet, whatever the promptings of his first impulse may have been, he speedily mastered them; resolved, even before she had done speaking, that neither word nor sign should escape him that might add to her misery, not though the cause of that misery was her love for another. He saw the woman he himself had loved so long, so truly—his wife, wretched, prostrate at his feet; and he saw, would see, nothing else. What, however, to say he could not so quickly determine—so merely uttering her name in a tone of more than usual tenderness and affection, he stooped over her, to raise her up from where she lay.

But before he had yet clasped her, she half rose, unaided, and throwing her arms round his knees, cried out, "Forgive me, forgive me, Okeyl, my husband, or do to me as you will; I deserve the worst; but have mercy on the poor lad, who has come, knowing nothing of you, nothing of my marriage, so far; and who has suffered so much—is still suffering. Oh, for God's sake, do not deny me; let me go and speak to him, see him this once only—only this once—I must, I owe it to him—is it not I who have been the cause of all his misery? It will not be for long—once only."

And here her voice caught, and a burst of passionate sobbing again overpowered her. But her hold did not unclasp, and she looked earnestly up in her husband's face; her own was now flushed and swollen, and her eyes drowned in tears.

Gently he unloosed her hands, raised her up, held her a moment to his breast, and kissed her. Then, gently still, he

placed her on a cushion leaning against a side-pole of the tent; and, after soothing her with word and caress all he could, and himself drying her tears, called for water. One of the maids, who had been roused from sleep by her mistress's wailing sobs, and was lying with eyes open, wondering what it meant, brought it in a cup, and would have remained by waiting, had not Okeyl immediately ordered her off, telling her to go outside the tent and watch at some little distance, lest any curious passer by might loiter about to pry or listen. The maid gone, he took the bowl and gave his wife to drink, holding it to her lips, for her own hands shook too much to grasp it. Gradually her agitation calmed; she smiled faintly in her husband's face, took his hand, and kissed it.

Seeing that the first violence of excitement had subsided, Okeyl judged the moment favourable for putting the questions, that he could not otherwise than ask; his voice was serious, but there was no trace of harshness in its tone.

"He whom you were speaking of, dearest, is the youth, the son of Aamir of Howazin—Alkamah, is it not?"

"Yes," was the scarcely audible answer, uttered with her face hid on her husband's shoulder; he was now seated by her, holding one of her hands in his.

"But how do you know that he is really here? Tell me all about it. Do not be afraid. I will not refuse you anything that you may ask, only tell me all," continued Okeyl.

Without looking up, but clasping his fingers tightly in her own, Selma began her story, with much difficulty at first, but gathering strength and clearness as she went on.

Okeyl heard without interrupting, only making from time to time some slight sign or gesture to encourage her in the narration. When she had concluded it,

"Selma," he said—and there was something in the earnestness of his voice that made her start, and raise

her eyes for a moment, then quickly cast them down—"Selma, I pity you from my heart; I pity him too; yet would to God that these things had not happened. However, neither you nor he have anything to fear. I will do my best for him, for your sake, as though he were my brother. And, after a short pause, "Dearest Selma," he added, in a half-inquiring tone, as if expecting her to speak.

But of this she was at the moment incapable; her tears were falling fast, but they were no longer the tears of mere un-mixed pain; shame, gratitude, affection even, had a share in them; they were tears almost of relief. Yet she could not find heart to look her husband in the face, or at once to answer him.

"Dearest," continued Okeyl, "my sister, we are in the hands of God; he has ordained it thus, and I will not blame either of you. Do not go on crying thus; be comforted. Come what may, you shall see him, and speak to him to-morrow. He is your guest, and under your protection, and you are under mine. God guard us all." Then, attributing her continued silence to exhaustion—natural after such extreme excitement—for that it was the generosity of his own conduct which now overpowered her mind and voice had not entered his thoughts. "But midnight is now past," he said, "and you must have need of rest. Lie down, dearest, and sleep quietly, and without care, till morning; you will break down else."

She turned right towards him, and casting herself on his breast, passionately embraced him.

"O thanks! thanks! my dear, my noble husband," she cried out; "may God reward you!" Then a sudden fear seized her, and drawing back, she caught hold of his dress. "You will be gentle with him, Okeyl? you will not threaten him? you will not do him any harm? Promise me!" she exclaimed.

Her husband smiled slightly, a painful smile.

"I swear to you, by God Most High, I will treat him as though he

were my own brother," he answered. "From me he shall hear nothing but good. Now do you lie down and rest yourself; morning is near."

Then, without summoning any of the servants, he himself spread a mattress on the floor, arranged the bed, and carefully laid her on it, where, wearied out as she was, by all she had gone through since sunset, she was in a few minutes fast asleep.

No sooner was Okeyl sure of this, than he stole silently out of the tent; and going to where several of his retainers slept, waked up one of them, and sent him off in quest of the herdsman, who was in charge of the milch-goats belonging to the household. The man was soon found. When he came his master took him aside, and made him repeat the whole story over again. Not a shadow of a doubt remained. It was Alkamah, the son of Aamir, and no other. This point made sure of, Okeyl ordered the herdsman to return at once, with all possible speed, to the cave, and to bring thence Alkamah's companion back with him, but as secretly as he could, and avoiding any one who might happen, even at that hour of night, to be on the way. He was also to take care not to alarm those in the cave; on the contrary, to give them every assurance of his master's good will and protection. He himself should be handsomely rewarded afterwards.

The man went on his errand, and Okeyl remained alone in the moonlight. He turned his steps back to the tent, but did not at once enter it, and, instead, remained a considerable time outside, thinking. Repellant as the reality was, he must face it. Long before, indeed, he had, in spite of himself, been in a measure aware how matters stood between his wife and the memory of her first lover; but, again and again he had said to himself it was only a memory, a fancy, a nothing; and it would be alike unworthy of him, and needlessly harsh to her, were he ever to make her any reproach on the subject, even so much as would be employed by his showing

that he was aware of it. The son of Aamir was gone, and dead ; of that he, like most others, was fully persuaded ; and his remembrance, however cherished while fresh, would, in the natural course of things, gradually fade away and disappear ; while it was tolerably certain that any allusion made by others, and more especially by a husband, would go further to confirm what he considered a mere idle imagination, than to efface it from a woman's mind. Time, and a husband's constant affection, would best do that. Thus he argued, and not unreasonably.

She, on her side, was still less inclined to speak, ashamed at heart, though enslaved. So, by a tacit compromise, a veil was drawn across what each believed, though with opposite feelings, to be an empty shadow of the past, devoid of act or purpose ; and their mutual confidence, entire as be-seemed husband and wife, on every other topic of daily occurrence, except this one, threw this particular reserve so far into the background of life as to render it indistinct, and, both believed, unimportant. Now, however, on this unhappy night, not only had the veil long and carefully maintained, been suddenly and violently torn away ; but there appeared distinct behind the rent, not an unsubstantial memory, an ineffective fancy, a fading dream, but a present and terrible fact. Unwelcome to him ; but was it equally unwelcome to her ?

Much he thought it over, but found no satisfactory conclusion to his thoughts. Deeply, cruelly wronged though he felt himself to have been, there was no redress to be had ; no reparation was possible now. Jealous ? of what ? Of an affection that had never been his ? Freely, unquestioned, his wife had herself made the avowal. Anger ? revenge ? But she had thrown not herself only, but his rival—his successful rival, so far as love was concerned—on his mercy. True, wife or whatever else in name, Selma could henceforth be nothing to him. She was not his, but Alkamah's. Not even the latter's death could restore

—restore what ? She had never been his.

But Okeyl still loved his wife, more than he himself knew ; and love, whatever some have asserted, though it may be gradually weakened and so at last destroyed, cannot be killed and drop down dead in an instant. And from this love, joined to his own natural generosity of character, sprung a great pity ; pity extending not over her only, but even over his rival, and leading him to blame not them but destiny ; or rather to acquiesce in what seemed to him the working of a higher decree, from which none could escape, neither he nor they. And thus the only result he reached was to confirm himself more strongly than ever in the resolution he had first made. He would act as though they were strangers to him ;—no, not strangers, but kinsfolk, brother and sister, in his tenderness towards them, and leave the rest to fate. "Come of it what may," he said to himself, "I shall not then be to blame ; and as for them, they must abide by the consequences of their own doings ; I will not interfere. But I wish—well, there is no good in wishing this or that now : God help us all." In this disposition he turned from the night, already in the dead stillness that precedes the first gleam of dawn, and went into the tent. Selma lay there, moaning in deep sleep ; he looked at her for a minute or two, then sought a distant corner of the tent and lay down also, but did not close his eyes.

The dawn had broke, but a few of the larger stars were yet in the sky, when the herdsman returned from his message, and with him Shebeeb. From this last Okeyl learnt every particular of Alkamah's story from first to last : how the lad, after being wounded and made prisoner in the Hejaz, had escaped thence and returned to Roweydah ; how his own family, hoping to cure him of his attachment for Selma, had attempted to convince him of her death, and for a while succeeded ; how after two years he had become aware that she was yet alive—only at this point of his tale

Shebeeb made no mention of the part he had taken in undeceiving his kinsman; how, knowing nothing as to Malik's daughter except that she had returned to her own land, they had set out in search of her, till they had come hither. But by what chance they had been led to look for her no longer in Nejran, but Yemamah, he did not say, nor would Okeyl, whatever thoughts may have crossed his mind, condescend to ask.

Was it, however, without some secret pleasure that Okeyl heard how much his rival had suffered? that recovery from the condition in which he now lay was hopeless? that his days, nay his hours, were numbered? To have wished it otherwise he must have been more than man, or less. Yet more fully perhaps, more bitterly than before, he felt, as Shebeeb proceeded in his recital, that his rival's death, however speedy, must needs come too late; that Selma as she had been could never more be his. Broken glass, broken troth, broken love: death, theirs or his, might sweep the fragments away, but could not mend them.

The sun was just rising when Selma awoke, pale and weak; she trembled as she stood up. Her husband took her in his arms, and kissed her—for the last time. "Come," he said. Shebeeb was waiting outside.

Closely veiled from head to foot, and supported between two of her maid-servants—for she tottered at every step, and without assistance must have fallen—she left the tent; and, never speaking a word or asking a question, unconscious seemingly of whither they were going or why, followed her husband. Shebeeb led the way. In this order they passed, without meeting any one, beyond the limits of the camp; crossed the valley, keeping at some distance from the village, till they reached the abrupt mountain foot, and entered a deep, winding gorge, which at last brought them to the lonely valley and cave, till then almost unknown and nameless: it received a name that day.

While these things were going on,

Alkamah had remained all that night in the heavy trance of fever and extreme weakness; asleep, though seeming to himself awake, and totally unaware either of the herdsman's second visit or of his own companion's movements, coming or going of evening, night, or morning. But in his sleep he was conscious, not of weariness or pain, but of an exquisite happiness; happiness such as his waking hours had not known for years—the fulness of love and life. Now he wandered with Selma under the green, transparent shade of a spring orchard, leaf and blossom, where birds sang sweet on the boughs around them, and cool crystal waters went flowing at their feet; her face was turned to him, a sweet girl's face, one smile; their talk was all of love. Then they were again together in another place, where he could not tell: it seemed a dwelling, yet there were neither walls nor roof, nor any bound; nothing was distinct, not even her form or face, nor movement, nor voice; only her presence encompassed him in great love and peace. This too passed, and he was alone, as in days long before, when a child in the quiet noonday solitude of his father's garden by the well; not a care in his mind, not an ache in his limbs, not a want in his heart, happy in the consciousness of youth without the sense of years; full of the life that is unlimited by within or around, beyond all distance or horizon, season or time. It had been his then, it was his once more; the life known to some, if not to many, in early boyhood, when the mind first realizes individuality, before the soul has yet divided itself by the later limitations of thought and act from the universe of which it is part; known more often when those limitations are vanishing away with the phase of existence to which they properly belong.

Thus passed the feverish hours of night, till the secret influences of the morning roused him from dreams to wakefulness, though not at once to any distinct idea; only he was aware of intense but by no means painful lassi-

tude, and of a carelessness of life such as he had never before experienced. Where he was, how he came to be there, what was to happen next, he felt no interest in; he did not even miss Shebeeb from the cave, or conjecture where he might have gone and on what errand. How quiet everything was! Perhaps he was already dead and buried. Could this be death? this the tomb? He could not have wished it otherwise. Then, in a flash of thought, the image of Selma returned, and with a pang like that of a half-drowned man when drawn out of the water and laid on the bank he returns to consciousness. Alkamah knew that he was still alive, and not yet free to die. One link, though only one, of the life-chain remained to break, but he felt that the touch of the hand which would seem to reunite it indissolubly with the past, would by that very act snap it for ever; that she, the angel of life, was also the appointed angel of death to him. The thought was comfort. So he lay there and waited, the fingers of one hand clasped over those of the other where the signet-ring had been, as if to assure that it was absent on its message now, and to prepare for replacing it when its work should be over, not to be removed again. It was otherwise ordained.

He would not, so dulled were his senses, have noticed or even heard the footsteps approaching the cavern, had there not been among them the tread for which he had so often in days gone by watched eagerly, as for the bringer of all his happiness; then it had been light, firm, and quick; now it was uncertain, slow, and faltering; but changed as that step was, and dying as were his own ears, they caught the sound and instantly recognized it; nothing short of actual death could have disguised it from them. With an instinctive effort, which would have been beyond whatever deliberate strength remained him, he half-raised himself from the ground where he was lying; he would have risen and gone to meet her, but his feet and knees were paralyzed and powerless now. Leaning forward he strained his

dim gaze, fixed on the entrance of the cave.

It was darkened by the group without. Shebeeb, and Okeyl with him would have been the first to enter; but Selma, who during the way thither had appeared like one entranced, scarcely able to move but for the help of her maids, and every moment on the point of sinking down between them, now by a quick effort shook herself loose of them, threw aside her veil, and forced her way to the front. Self-respect, the presence of strangers, of her husband, present shame, after reproach, all had vanished, except the remorseful love that urged her on, regardless of everything besides. With a staggering eagerness that stumbled over its own haste, she went straight towards him who in that moment was all the world to her; the others astonished, awestruck even, stood aside: they felt they had no part nor right in such a meeting.

Alkamah strove once more to rise, but could not. He stretched out his arms to her as she came forward; his lips moved, but uttered no audible sound. "Alkamah! my love, I am here," said Selma, as she stooped over him. He caught her hands and gazed upwards earnestly, searchingly, into her face; then his own was transfigured by a smile that gave back all the radiance of youth and happy love; an instant more and the smile settled into fixed, peaceful calm, his eyes grew dark, his hold slackened, his head fell on her breast.

Terrified, despairing, "Alkamah, my love, my own!" she exclaimed, "look at me, speak to me but once—speak; say you have forgiven me." There was no voice nor answer from the dead; she fell beside him heavily on the cavern floor.

At first they thought that she too was dead, but it was not so. With care they lifted her up, carried her outside the cave, and laid her where the air blew cool in the mountain shadow; it was a long swoon, but in time she revived. Thus much they knew by her opening her eyes, but she soon closed them again,

and neither moved nor stirred, till after a while they brought her lover's dead body out of the cavern, and prepared to bury it in the sandy soil near the entrance. Then she sat up in her place; and while they arranged and wrapped the limbs and recited the last prayers that commended the dead to his Maker, she looked fixedly on with dry eyes that never flickered or turned aside, till the earth had closed over him whom she had thus seen again, after long separation, to die. When all was over, she hid her face in her hands and wept in silence. But soon she rose. "It has been," she said; and without a word more, or even turning back as she left the valley, she made sign to her maids to follow her, and unsupported returned with her husband to the tent.

There for three days she remained, never once leaving the dwelling, but constantly occupying herself in ordinary household duties, as if nothing had been. Nor did she during all that time make any allusion, either in word or manner, to what had happened; nor even, at least in the presence of others, once shed a tear. On the fourth morning she was gone. They missed her, but waited till noon; she did not return. Then they searched for her, first in the neighbouring tents, afterwards in the village and its gardens; she was not there. But towards evening they found her in the valley of the cave, stretched on the earth by Alkamah's grave, lifeless. The signet-ring was clasped in her hand.

"May God have mercy on her and on him; they were true lovers," said Okeyl, as the grave they dug for her side by side with that of Alkamah, hid for ever from him what he once had called his wife. "I loved her, and would have loved and cherished her to the end; but she was not mine, she never had been mine. She was his, and could not remain separated from him. It was the decree of God."

The event was soon known abroad; and the chiefs of Yemen, who showed every sign of sympathy with Okeyl, sought to retain him amongst them, and more than ever renewed their offers of family alliance. But Yemamah, with its reminiscences was insupportable to him, and before many weeks were over he had struck his tents and returned to his own country. There he married again, and his wife bore him many children. He loved them and her well; yet to the last he felt the longings of unavailing regret for her who, separated from him by more than death, united to another, shared, no more to part, the resting-place of Alkamah.

Shebeeb too left Yemamah a few days after his foster-brother's death, and retraced the path by which they had journeyed before. Reaching the hut where they had halted, he found it still standing, but open and deserted. Of its weird tenants, Jandeb and her mother, nothing was ever seen or heard again. He returned to Roweydah, and died there.

W. G. PALGRAVE.

SAFE.

SAFE ! the battle-field of life
 Seldom knows a pause in strife.
 Every path is set with snares,
 Every joy is crossed by cares.
 Brightest morn has darkest night,
 Fairest bloom has quickest blight.
 Hope has but a transient gleam,
 Love is but a passing dream,
 Trust is Folly's helpless waif.
 Who dare call their dearest safe ?

But thou, though peril loom afar,
 What hast thou to do with war ?
 Let the wild stream flood its brink,
 There's no bark of thine to sink.
 Let Falsehood weave its subtle net,
 Thou art done with vain regret.
 Let Fortune frown, and friends grow strange,
 Thou hast passed the doom of change.
 We plan and struggle, mourn and chafe—
 Safe, my Darling, dead, and safe !

S. K. P.

THE FOREIGN LOANS COMMITTEE.

THE Committee of the House of Commons appointed at the instance of Sir Henry James to investigate the methods by which the British public had been induced to risk their money in sundry foreign loans is unique in several respects. In the first place, as has been pointed out in various quarters, this is the only committee that has ever sat upon Stock Exchange affairs; secondly, it seems a committee without definite object in a legislative point of view; and, lastly, it is a committee that, in its present form, deals exclusively with what is usually subject matter for civil or criminal proceedings at law. In one word, its sole practical object seems to be to hold up to the public the ways and means of certain forms of swindling in the City, and the names of those that are supposed to have been the swindlers. Naturally an investigation of this sort is rather a difficult affair. At every turn some one's toes are trod upon, some one's character comes forth with what at least looks like an ugly smudge, and feelings accordingly are very keenly roused in many quarters to oppose the progress of the inquiry. We have heard a good deal about "lobbying" being resorted to in order to stop the torrent of strange narratives which the committee is giving to the world—a method of squashing investigation, which, in its ugly American sense of bribery, intimidation, and fraud, it was hoped was unknown here. Several attempts have been made by raising side issues in the House of Commons to stop the further progress of the inquiry, and the feeling is growing stronger in some quarters against the policy that led to its institution. There is truth in the grounds urged for that hostility, but in order to judge the question impartially, it is necessary to deal only with facts;

prejudices would inevitably be too strong for human judgment in a case like the present were one to allow feelings to have any voice in the decision.

Now there are a good many facts about the appointment of this committee which tell strongly in favour of the conclusion that it would have been better never to set it a-going; and which it is needful to review first, so that we may have due balance to those arguments that speak in favour of the inquiry.

First of all, to recur to the second point laid down above, this committee, to put it colloquially, "only washes dirty linen in public." It has, and can have, no ulterior legislative object, for you cannot pass an adulteration act that shall apply to "watered" or watery foreign stocks; nor can you lay down for those merchants and brokers who form the Stock Exchange, the rules by which they are to conduct their business. The sole legislative issue that the inquiry could have must lie in a suggestion that laws relating to fraud should be more stringent and more easily brought to bear upon the rascality which finds vent in lying prospectuses and Stock Market swindles; but that is an issue which relates to law reform in general, and therefore falls to be dealt with on a far broader basis than this one form of thieving and roguery could furnish. But this limitation of the scope of the committee has the direct effect of making its work wear superficially a most sinister aspect. Everybody who comes before it is, by the mere fact of his being summoned, stamped in a measure with the brand of rascality, just because the object of the committee seems merely to be to show up rascals. The investigating committee not being a broadly based one, taking up its subject for the purpose of mending in some

fashion the policy of the State, inevitably assumes the functions and task of a public prosecutor. Its function is to call the thieves before it to testify to the manner of their stealing; and, by a natural inference of the public, every man who testifies—be he rogue or not—is set down as one of the gang. This has a most unfortunate effect in two ways. (1.) It may hurt really innocent men who consent to be examined, and (2.) it also prevents the committee from reaching its true object, which is, I take it, not a legislative one, but one merely concerning the *modus operandi* of business. All evil doing finds its best profit in simulating what is good. This species of iniquity forms no exception in that respect. Hence the value of getting to the core of the question by an understanding of the process by which proceedings the most fraudulent have adopted the forms of an honest business and thriven therein. Possibly were that well seen, these forms could be mended; but the mere exposure of malpractices cannot make this point clear. So long, however, as an appearance before the committee is taken to mean participation in misdoing, it will be impossible to get that kind of testimony which would throw light on this most important side of the question. It is not enough that we know how the rogues do business—we must know how honest men do it too. For the latter object the narrow range of the committee's operations is most unfortunate.

And it is so also because of still another element which has done more to damage this inquiry in the estimation of City people than any other; and it is this—the whole of the loans which Sir Henry James specified in his motion are at this moment the subject of lawsuits, and it is plausibly urged that all that the committee is doing is to collect evidence in a rough and ready fashion, so that it may be easy for the suffering bond-holders to force restitution. I do not believe for a moment that such was the purpose of

Sir Henry James, nor do I think that there is the least ground in his behaviour over this affair for the complaint that he has misused information possessed by him as a counsel. All the facts which are known go to show that Sir Henry has acted with the utmost integrity all through; yet I cannot help joining in the regret that he did not endeavour either to do more when he was doing it, or, finding that impossible, resolve to do nothing. Probably his ignorance of what is technically called "business," and of what the usages and history of the City were, led him to think that only a few loans, whose names had become prominently notorious, needed examination; but in that case he should have consulted persons able to tell him more than he knew. For his mistake has been most unfortunate in that it has given a leverage to those who object, from private reasons of much cogency, to the further progress of this investigation. His inquiry looks superficially just what it is the interest of many people to describe it as being; and these, by their noisy lamentations, may succeed in some degree in transferring to themselves, should they feel unpleasant after-consequences from the exposure, some of the gushing sympathy now apparently so readily bestowed by the vulgar of all classes on the more blatant kind of knavery. The delicacy of the subject chosen for investigation; the shades of participation which in a society so mixed as that of the City is, make it in some cases impossible to say that a man is morally guilty, although his deeds may have been here and there questionable; the necessity for being removed from any imputation of pandering to the demands of a clamorous few—these, and many other considerations should have made the formation of this committee a most carefully considered thing, and have caused the objects of its creation to be most carefully chosen. The few loan swindles which it was set to expose are comparatively insignificant. Many greater examples of evil doing might probably be found in

the City than that which attaches to the loans of Costa Rica, for instance; while there can be no doubt that a thorough examination of the manner in which a few loans for states still bearing some reputation of solvency have been raised would reveal more as to business ways, and show more of the evils which beset loan concocting, than even the story of Honduras with its mahogany forests, its "ship railway," and its gangs of low vagabonds, who for a brief period played the vulture upon the credulous rich, or, and that is sadder to think of, on the people of pinched incomes whom the high interest drew into investing their all. There are countries, too, which have suffered and suffer now from the loads of debt which have been laid on their backs as no South American republic has ever suffered—nations as hopelessly in the grip of the ruthless usurer as ever a spendthrift heir—and ought not these to be considered? England, as a great state, owes a duty to oppressed debtors, if her children are the oppressors, as well as to ruined creditors; and, if judging at all, ought to take steps to judge impartially between them. Why should these other questionable practices be passed by then, and only one or two small samples of loans which have gone into utter collapse paraded before the world? The selection should have been wide, embracing good loans and bad loans, and thus the committee would have assumed a dignified position before the world, as it would have done a much higher work than it is now doing. The motion which was to have been made by Mr. Barclay on the 20th of April was conceived in the spirit which should have guided the labours of the committee from the first, but it was perhaps on the whole as well that he did not pursue it to an issue. All that he could have done, supposing his motion carried, would have been to add one or two more loans to the list of the committee, and that would not have done much good unless the attitude and purpose of the committee itself had

been changed by a much more radical revision of its line of duty. There have been indications since then, moreover, that the committee intended tacitly to assume broader functions; the evidence of Mr. Lionel Cohen being refused on April 22, on the ground that general evidence would be taken after the evidence on particular loans. That shows some determination to travel beyond the original intention of Sir Henry James, and is a good sign, only that the basis on which the general evidence is taken will still be too narrow.

It will be seen, however, that the objections I raise thus in a brief summary, and which are those in the mouths of some influential sections of the public, are all secondary to the main inquiry, which must now be put. Was this committee in any sense justifiable? Animadversions on these secondary questions do not, in fact, touch this point, and it is a mistake altogether to confound the one issue with the other. The objections may be many to the manner in which a thing is done, and yet that thing remain worth doing. Putting all due weight upon these objections, then, I must still hold that they do not amount to anything like proof that this inquiry was in itself either inexpedient or unjustifiable. It is all very well, and in a sense very true, to say that the deluded public have a remedy for their grievances in the ordinary courts of law, and to say also that these things should not be dragged before an extemporised committee like this, possessed of certain extra-legal powers that lead to nothing. The ordinary courts of law are, however, inaccessible to at least half of those who have suffered most heavily by these swindles, and the other half cannot be got to act together with sufficient resolution, partly because of apathy, and partly from the feeling that it is almost a toss up whether they gain anything if they do go to law. If we catch an ordinary thief his punishment is easy, but stealing by the million is so gigantic

an affair that the common mind is overpowered, and cannot see either the guilt or the motives for it in a criminal light at all. So, when wholesale stealers of this kind are hauled before a jury, the jury are apt not to agree on a verdict. Moreover, what is the end of law proceedings in such cases? To punish the offenders or to get restitution? If the first, Where is the philanthropy that is going to stand the cost for the public good? Fleeced bondholders are not to be expected to throw good money after bad out of pure patriotism and brotherly love. If the second, How can any one know whether the money can be got back again upon the judgment of the court, supposing it given in favour of the plaintiffs? Rogues win money, and they also lose money, for many of them are fools as much as rogues, and those that are not may fail from over astuteness; and what use would a barren decree against such people be, supposing they had gambled all their gains away, as some of the gentry connected with the San Domingo imposition are on good authority said to have done? Looked at without prejudice it will be seen that there is seldom adequate motive to pursue rascality in one's private capacity for such objects. I heard but the other day, for example, of a case where a fraudulent bankruptcy of a public company was concerned. By the bankruptcy all creditors of the estate were defrauded, and the business passed into private hands, who ignored the creditors altogether. Some of the latter clubbed together and dragged the estate into the Court of Chancery, on public grounds, and got no redress. They had, however, the melancholy satisfaction of paying all law costs for the public good. The case would be the same in regard to foreign loans, and indeed only quite recently the Master of the Rolls gave judgment in a suit brought against some Bolivian agents, contractors, or concessionaires, by the bondholders to have their money returned to them because the objects for

which it was borrowed were not accomplished. The contract under which the money had been procured had been utterly fallacious in fact, yet judgment went against the lenders, and they were practically told that it was no business of theirs what was done with the money, no matter on what understanding they had lent it. They could not touch it and yet other parties could not touch it, and it now hangs as it were in the air. So is it all round; partly because on many points raised in such suits we have practically no law at all, only judicial rulings made by men, not one in a thousand of whom has ever understood "business" in its City sense. Nothing is easier than for an acute business man to bamboozle the lawyers. But because that is so, are the few daring rascals, who creep in amongst honest men of business, to continue to rob us? Surely not. They ought to be reached somehow, and probably the very best way to reach them is to so expose their peculiar doings out of their own mouths, that it shall be an education to the public, and a warning for the future. These men practised upon human ignorance, but let the world once know what their tricks have been, and their occupation will, it is hoped, henceforth be gone. For this education nothing could be a better agency than a public parliamentary committee, and with all its drawbacks, I must believe that the exposure which such a committee is now giving is doing great good. There is no sound honest business which will suffer from it ultimately; and painful though the process be, even business men themselves may learn something from the revelation, and that too in spite of its one-sided character. No class in the community has hitherto been so exempt from public scrutiny as City financiers and Stock Exchange men, and it may well be that some practices have grown up with, and become engrafted on, their modes of doing business, which will not bear the light of day, but with which long use has made

them so familiar as to blind men to their true meaning. City men, too, are so protected by the loose character of the English law of libel that the press cannot—however much it would—say a tithe of what may often be necessary in preventing fraud. You may abuse Her Majesty's Government, but the "City" is sacred; the "City" can pay for silence, if need be, as well as coerce refractory critics by methods of its own, and by legal terrors that are all the greater for being undefined. It may do good, therefore, that the City should see its customs brought to the scrutiny of the public by the revelations of even the bad amongst its own people; and if this investigation could be but widened in its scope so as to include the sheep with the goats—so as to be a statesmanlike thing—it could not fail to be very valuable, not merely to the British investor, who is often something of a greedy person, intent upon usurious returns upon his capital, and therefore not much deserving of pity when he does follow the false lure, but to foreign States—to borrowers all over the world, as well as to lenders here. How poor borrowers suffer, one fact will show as well as volumes. Turkey brought out a loan for 18,000,000*l.* last year, bearing interest at 5 per cent, and at the price of 43½ net. The net amount of the loan would therefore be about 7,800,000*l.*, and of that Turkey got at the outside probably not more than 5,000,000*l.* But of that sum I question if one-half was available for "reproduction purposes." The bulk was swallowed up by the money-lenders, who have helped Turkey always with their private moneys at exorbitant interest for a short time, and then, when they had no more to lend or were gorged with unnegotiable paper, launched a new loan at a price to the public that left them plenty of commission beyond the Government price—thus transferring their private risks to the public in a fashion which was highly profitable to themselves certainly, but to no one else. How are these things done? Has England no interest

in keeping her fair name unstained by those of persons who participate in laying burdens like these upon the miserable people of other empires? At the above rate Turkey would pay from 25 to 30 per cent for this money per annum, and pay it literally for nothing, except to keep the financiers' game going until the life-blood of the people had been drained dry. When that is accomplished these men will mount and fly, leaving borrowers and lenders alike to mourn together over their common ruin. It would at once elevate the tone of these investigations, and give them a definite purpose for good, visible to all men, were the committee to look into such instances of gross usury, in the interests of those who are not her citizens, but in whose welfare she cannot but have a high stake nevertheless. Depend upon it the reckoning day must come for much of that iniquitous financing whereby nations have been crushed to the very earth, and it is at once a petty and an impolitic thing to confine the labours of a dignified body like a Committee of the House of Commons to what may be called a few examples of private plundering, when there are so many of greater public moment and involving higher crime, but in regard to which the pocket of the British investor has not yet felt the squeeze, because some life still remains among the primitive races whom his money has ruined, and some honesty too.

The whole subject may be briefly summed up then, in this: That there are many weak points in the constitution of the committee, and that it has too narrow an object in view; but at the same time there is so very much that wants looking into in the principles of the borrowing and lending which goes on in the City, that the public have reason to be thankful when even the least light is suffered to reach them. The ways of the City are a sealed book no longer, and if the revelation be only garbled and partial, it is not on that account to be utterly rejected. Better

let us be thankful for what we have got, for it might well have been, that had more been attempted we would have obtained less. The many objections which can be reasonably or plausibly urged against the mode and scope of this inquiry do not suffice to procure its utter condemnation so long as it can be reasonably believed that something has been done to render the English public less credulous and more cautious. It rests with them after all, in the long run, to put down this

sinister trade, and if they do not lay themselves open to the lures of the financial necromancer as easily as heretofore, the City will be easily purified.

Something will therefore be gained in the meantime by the tales given to the world, "sworn lies" though not a little of them may be ; and perhaps on another opportunity Parliament may enter upon that wider inquiry which concerns the fate of toiling millions in foreign lands with stronger popular support than it could hope for now.

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